An Account of the

SOCIETIES

FOR

Reformation of Manners,

IN

ENGLAND and IRELAND.

With a PERSUASIVE to

Persons of all RANKS,

TO BE

Zealous and Diligent in Promoting the Execution of the Laws against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*,

For the Effecting

A National Reformation.

Published with the Approbation of a Considerable Number of the *Lords Spiritual* and *Temporal*, and Honourable *Judges* of both Kingdoms.

The Third Edition.

Who is on the Lord's side, let him come unto me? Exod. 32 26
Who will rise up with me against the Wicked? Or who will take my part against the Evil doers? Psal. 94. 16. N. Tr.

LONDON, Printed for *B. Aylmer*, and *A. Bell*, in *Cornhill*; *D. Brown*, without *Temple-Bar*; *T. Parkhurst*, in *Cheapside*; *J. Robinson*, *T. Leigh* and *D. Midwinter*, and *R. Sympson*, in St. *Paul's*-Church-Yard; *T. Goodwin*, and *W. Rogers*, in *Fleet Street*; *J. Walthoe*, in the *Temple*; *H. Harrison*, at *Lincolns-Inn*; *S. Heyrick*, at *Grays-Inn-Gate* in *Holbourn*; and *J. Fox*, in *Westminster-Hall*, 1700.

For the more general Benefit of the Publick, this Book is Sold at One Shilling Bound.

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With a PERSUASIVE to

Certain of all RANKS,

TO

A National Reformation.

UMI

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1700

To the AUTHOR.

SIR,

WE have perused the Book you sent us, Entituled, *An Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*; the *Design* of which is so truly Great and Noble, so much for the Honour of God, the Advancement of Piety and Virtue, and the publick Good both of Church and State, that it cannot fail of being approved by all good Men. The *Method* likewise proposed, in order to the Promoting and Accomplishing the said Design, is, We

conceive, moſt proper, and (by the Bleſſing of God attending it) moſt likely to prove effectual. And that Pious Men of all Ranks and Qualities may be excited by this good Book to contribute, in their reſpective Places and Stations, their beſt Endeavours towards a *National Reformation of Manners*, is the moſt Humble and Hearty Prayer of,

SIR,

Your very Loving Friends,

Lords Temporal,
- *Pembroke*, P.
- *Lonſdale*, P.S.
- *Leeds*.
- *Bedford*.
- *Taviſtock*.

Lords Spiritual,
- T. *Carliol*.
- H. *Bangor*.
- N. *Ceſtrienſ*.
- S. *Elienſ*.
- J. *Oxon*.

Lords Temporal,

Lindſey.
Kent.
Bridgwater.
Thanet.
Radnor.
Abingdon.
Portland.
Falconberg.
Warington.
Rochford.
Say & Sele.
Townſend.
Longvile.
Bergavenny.
Eure.
Willoughby of *Parham.*
Brook.
Maynard.

Lords Spiritual,

E. *Glouceſtr.*
R. *Bath & Wells.*
J. *Briſtol.*
J. *Ciceſtrienſ.*

Lords Temporal,

- Berkley of Stratton.
- Dartmouth.
- Gailford.
- Lempster.
- Haverſham.
- Barnard.
- Digby.
- Allington.
- Cutts.

Judges,

- Ed. Ward.
- Ed. Nevill.
- N. Lechmere.
- Tho. Rokeby.
- John Turton.
- J. Blencowe.
- Hen. Hatſell.

WE of the Kingdom of *Ireland*, whoſe Names are under-written, do highly approve of the Pious Deſign of a Book, Entituled, *An Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners, &c.* and do heartily join therein.

Lords Spiritual,

Nar. Dublin, Ar. Biſhop.

J. Tuam, Ar. Biſhop.

E. *Killmore*, *Ardagh*.

Will. Derry.

Lords Temporal,

Drogheda.

Mount, Alexander.

Longford.

Loftus.

Charlemont.

Lords Spiritual,

D. Cork,
Roſs.
N. Waterford,
Liſmore.
John Oſſory.
T. Killaloe.
Rich. Meath.
T. Dromore.

Judges,

Rich. Pyne.
John Hely.
Rob. Doyne.
Richard Cox.
J. Jeffreyſon.

Judges,

Henry Echlin.
N. Donnellan.
J. Coote.
R. Traty.

WE of the Kingdom of *Scotland*, whose Names are underwritten, do highly approve of the Pious Design of a Book, Entitled, *An Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*, &c. And do heartily join therein.

Hamilton.
Tweeddale.
Tullibardine.
Ruglen.
Rosse.
Yester.
B. Hamilton.

THE Commiſſioners appointed by the late General Aſſembly of this National Church conſidering how much *Immorality* and *Vice* doth ſtill abound in this Nation, through the Neglect of the due Execution of the Laws againſt *Prophaneneſs*; and it being recommended to them by the ſaid Aſſembly, to aſſiſt and encourage any Propoſals that ſhould be made to them for the more effectual Suppreſſing of the ſame; and being likewiſe informed, that the Chriſtian Endeavours of ſuch as have entred into *Societies for Reformation of Manners*, both in *ENGLAND* and *IRELAND*, have, through the Bleſſing of God, proved very effectual for curbing and puniſhing Vice, and advancing Sobriety and Virtue; and ſome of the ſaid Commiſſioners having ſeen and peruſed a Treatiſe written upon that Subject, Entitled, *An Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners, with a Perſwaſive*, &c. and moſt of them having ſeen and peruſed the *Abſtract* thereof, they are ſo well ſatisfied with the Purpoſe and main Deſign thereof, (as very proper for exciting Perſons of all Ranks to a more thorough Reformation in their own Lives, and Advancement thereof among others,) that they reckon themſelves obliged to bleſs God, who hath put it into the Heart of others to go before them in ſo laudable an Example, and their Duty to imitate the ſame in their own Perſons; and likewiſe to recommend it to all Miniſters and Elders to peruſe the ſaid Book and its Abſtract, and ſtudy to induce all piouſly diſpoſed Perſons to imitate the laudable Zeal of theſe worthy *Societies*, and their *Methods*, ſo far as may be

be ſuitable to the Circumſtances and Laws of this Nation, and the Conſtitutions of this Church, for compaſſing ſo glorious an End, and ſo abſolutely neceſſary to the Proſperity and Welfare both of Church and State. And that both *Miniſters* and *Elders*, and all other well diſpoſed Perſons, may more readily underſtand how the Meaſures and Methods of theſe highly commendable *Societies* may be adapted and ſuited to the Circumſtances and Laws of this Kingdom, and the Conſtitutions of this Church, the ſaid Commiſſioners appointed by the general Aſſembly, do alſo hereby recommend a Diſcourſe lately printed, concerning the Execution of the Laws againſt *Prophaneneſs*, as a Piece very uſeful and neceſſary both for Miniſters and all others who have a Zeal for God, and deſire to ſee *Vice* and *Prophaneneſs* curbed and reſtrained, and the Wrath of God averted, which otherways may be expected will inevitably overtake the Land. Extracted from the Records of the ſaid Commiſſioners and ſubſcribed by

Geo. Meldrum, Moder.
Nic. Spence, Cl. Pa J.

At Edingburgh, *the Nineteenth Day of* June, *One Thouſand Seven Hundred Years*, Poſt Meridiem.

NOus Souſſignéz Commiſſaires nommèz par l'Eglize Françoiſe de la Savoie pour examiner la Traduction que Monſieur *Gally de Gaujac* Miniſtre Françoiſe à faite d'un Livre Anglois qui à pour titre, *Relation des Societez etablies en Angleterre & en Irlande pour la Reformation des Moeurs, &c.* declarons avoir lu cette traduction dans laquelle nous nauons rien trouue qui ne ſoit conforme à L'original. Nous jugeons de plus, que cet ouvrage pourra etre tres utile à toutes les Egliſes Chretiennes pour reprimer le Vice, & faire pratiquer la Vertu. Et nous croions dignes de la reconnoiſſance publique la Zele & la Piete des Perſonnes illuſtres qui ont formé & appuié le deſſein dont l'Autheur à tres bien ecrit l'Hiſtoire, & dont on peut ſe promettre, avec la benediction de Dieu, des ſuittes tres avantageuſes. Fait à Londres le 17 *Decembre*, 1700.

De Larriere.
Calamothe.
J. de la Farque.
L. de la Faye.

WE whoſe Names are under-written, Commiſſioners appointed by the *French* Church at the *Savoy* to examine the *French* Tranſlation of an *Engliſh* Book, Entituled, *An Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in* England *and* Ireland, *&c.* done by Monſieur *Gally de Gaujac*, *French* Miniſter, do declare, that we have read the ſaid Tranſlation, which we find exactly agreeable to the Original. And we are moreover of Opinion, that the ſaid Book may be of great Uſe to all Chriſtian Churches for the Suppreſſion of Vice, and for Encouraging the Practice of Virtue; and that all Men muſt commend and praiſe the Zeal and Piety of thoſe worthy Perſons who have contrived and promoted the Deſign, the Hiſtory whereof the Author hath excellently well written, and which we hope will prove, with God's Bleſſing, very ſerviceable and ſucceſsful.

De Larriere.
Calamothe.
J. de la Farque.
L. de la Faye.

Nous

NOus Souſſignéz Miniſtres & Anciens del Egliſe Françoiſe de Londres aſant été chargez par le Conſiſtoire de la dite Egliſe de lire un liure Anglois, Intitulé, *An Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*, &c. & d'en donner en ſon Nom notre Jugement, declarons que la Reformation des Moeurs eſtune choſe ſe excellente, ou les Etats & les Egliſes ont tant d'Intereſt que nous ne doutons nullement que les Etrangers qui n'entendent point la Langue de ce Roiaume verront avec plaiſir la traduction de ce liure qui en montre la neceſſité, & qui méme fait voir qu'elle n'eſt point une belle idée qui ne puiſſe avoir de realité. On s'imagine communement, que comme le diſoit autrefois un grand Maitre en Politique, il ne faut point attaquer les deſordres enracinez depeur de commettre les loix publiques & d'en decouurir trop evidemment la foibleſſe, l'on voit cepandant ici que des perſonnes denuez preſque de tout appui humain & ſoutenus ſeulement par leur Zele aſant entrepris de s'oppoſer au torrent de divers Pechez qui inondoient cette Nation, ont eu des Succez tres conſiderables qui montrent qu'on ne ſe donneroit pas une peine inutile d'entreprendre la correction des licences qui font gemir les bonnes ames. Ainſi la lecture de cetraité pourra étre tres vtile a engager les gens debien à s'unir autant que les loix & les coutumes de leur pais le permettent, pour arréter le cours des vices qui les deſolent. Et dans cette penſée nous ne pouuons que nous ne le recommandions comme un ouurage digne d'étre leu attentiuement, & qui merite qu'on implore la benediction de Dieu ſur l'auteur qui l'à compoſé, ſur ceux dont il decrit & recommande le project, & ſur les perſonnes

ſonnes illuſtres qui favoriſent la noble & glorieuſe Entreprize à laquelle il encourage. Fait à *Londres* le 19 menjour de *Mars*, 170$\frac{1}{2}$.

D. Primeroſe.
Ch. Bertheau.
R. Zautuut.
Robert Myre.

By

By the King,

A PROCLAMATION,

For Preventing and Puniſhing

Immorality and Prophaneneſs.

WILLIAM R.

Hereas We cannot but be deeply Senſible of the great Goodneſs and Mercy of Almighty God, in putting an End to a Long, Bloody and Expenſive War, by the Concluſion of an honourable Peace; ſo We are not leſs touched with a Reſentment, that notwithſtanding this and

A many

many other great Blessings and Deliverances, Impiety, Prophaneness and Immorality do still abound in this our Kingdom: And whereas nothing can prove a greater Dishonor to a well ordered Government, where the Christian Faith is professed, nor is likelier to provoke God to withdraw his Mercy and Blessings from us, and instead thereof to inflict heavy and severe Judgments upon this Kingdom, than the open and avowed Practice of Vice, Immorality and Prophaneness, which amongst many Men has too much prevailed in this Our Kingdom of late Years, to the high Displeasure of Almighty God, the great Scandal of Christianity, and the ill and fatal Example of the rest of Our Loving Subjects, who have been Soberly Educated, and whose Inclinations would lead them to the Exercise of Piety and Virtue, did they not daily find such frequent and repeated Instances of Dissolute Living, Prophaneness and Impiety, which has in a great Measure been occasioned by the Neglect of the Magistrates not putting in Execution those good Laws which have been made for Suppressing and Punishing thereof, and by the ill Example of many in Authority, to the great Dishonour of God,

and

and Reproach of Our Religion: Wherefore, and for that We cannot expect Encrease or Continuance of the Blessings We and Our Subjects Enjoy, without providing Remedies to prevent the like Evils for the future, We think Our Selves bound by the Duty We owe to God, and the Care We have of the People committed to Our Charge, to proceed in taking effectual Course, that Religion, Piety, and Good Manners may, according to Our hearty Desire, Flourish and Encrease under Our Administration and Government; and being thereunto moved by the Pious Address of the Commons in Parliament Assembled, We have thought fit, by the Advice of Our Privy Council, to Issue this Our Royal Proclamation, and to Declare Our Royal Purpose and Resolution to Discountenance and Punish all manner of Vice, Immorality and Prophaneness in all Persons, from the highest to the lowest Degree within this Our Realm, and particularly in such who are Employed near Our Royal Person; and that for the greater Encouragement of Religion and Morality, We will, upon all Occasions, Distinguish Men of Piety and Virtue by Marks of Our Royal Fa-

vour. And we do expect that all Persons of Honor, or in Place of Authority, will to their utmost contribute to the Discountenancing Men of Dissolute and Debauched Lives, that they being reduced to Shame and Contempt, may be enforced the sooner to Reform their ill Habits and Practices, that the Displeasure of Good Men towards them may supply what the Laws (it may be) cannot wholly prevent. And for the more Effectual Reforming these Men, who are a Discredit to Our Kingdom, Our further Pleasure is, and We do hereby strictly Charge and Command all Our Judges, Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, and all other Our Officers and Ministers, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, and other Our Subjects, whom it may concern, to be very Vigilant and Strict in the Discovery and the Effectual Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons who shall be Guilty of Excessive Drinking, Blasphemy, Prophane Swearing and Cursing, Lewdness, Prophanation of the Lord's-Day, or other Dissolute, Immoral or Disorderly practices, as they will answer it to Almighty God, and upon pain of Our highest Displeasure. And for the more Effectual proceedings herein,

We

We do hereby Direct and Command Our Judges of Assizes and Justices of Peace, to give strict Charges at the respective Assizes and Sessions, for the due prosecution and punishment of all Persons that shall presume to Offend in any the Kinds afore-said, and also of all persons that, contrary to their Duty, shall be Remiss or Negligent in putting the said Laws in Execution, and that they do at their respective Assizes and Quarter-Sessions of the Peace, cause this Our Proclamation to be publickly Read in Open Court immediately before the Charge is given. And We do hereby further Charge and Command every Minister in his respective Parish or Chappel, to Read or cause to be Read this Our Proclamation, at least Four times in every Year, immediately after Divine Service, and to incite and stir up their respective Auditories to the practice of Piety and Virtue, and the Avoiding of all Immorality and Prophaneness. And to the end that all Vice and Debauchery may be prevented, and Religion and Virtue practised by all Officers, private Soldiers, Mariners or others, who are Employed in Our Service, either by Sea or Land, We do hereby strictly

Charge and Command all Our Commanders and Officers whatsoever, That they do take Care to Avoid all Prophaneness, Debauchery, and other Immoralities, and that by the Piety and Virtue of their own Lives and Conversations they do set good Examples to all such as are under their Authority; and likewise to take Care and Inspect the Behaviour and Manners of all such as are under them, and to punish all those who shall be Guilty of any of the Offences afore-said. And whereas several Wicked and Prophane Persons have presumed to Print and Publish several pernicious Books and Pamphlets, which contain in them Impious Doctrines against the Holy Trinity, and other Fundamental Articles of Our Faith, tending to the Subversion of the Christian Religion, therefore for the Punishing the Authors and Publishers thereof, and for the preventing such Impious Books and Pamphlets being published or printed for the future, We do hereby strictly Charge and prohibit all Persons, that they do not presume to Write, Print or Publish any such pernicious Books or Pamphlets, under the pain of Incurring Our Higly Displeasure, and of being punished according

cording to the utmost Severity of the Law. And We do hereby strictly Charge and Require all Our Loving Subjects to Discover and Apprehend such Person and Persons whom they shall know to be the Authors or Publishers of any such Books or Pamphlets, and to bring them before some Justice of Peace or Chief Magistrate, in Order that they may be proceeded against according to Law.

Given at Our Court at *Kensington* the Four and Twentieth Day of *February*, 1697. In the Tenth Year of Our Reign.

GOD save the KING.

HER LATE MAJESTIES GRACIOUS LETTER

(In the Abſence of the KING,)

To the Juſtices of the Peace *in the County of* Middleſex, July 9. 1691.

For the Suppreſſing of

Prophaneneſs and Debauchery.

MARIE R.

Truſty and Well-Beloved, We Greet you well. Conſidering the great and indiſpenſable Duty incumbent upon Us, to promote and encourage a Reformation of the Manners of all Our Subjects, that ſo the Service

Service of God may be Advanced, and thoſe Bleſſings be procured to theſe Nations, which always attend a Conſcientious Diſcharge of our reſpective Duties, according to our ſeveral Relations; We think it neceſſary, in order to the obtaining of this Publick Good, to recommend to you the putting in Execution, with all Fidelity and Impartiality, thoſe Laws which have been made, and are ſtill in Force againſt the Prophanation of the Lord's-Day, Drunkenneſs, Prophane Swearing and Curſing, *and all other* Lewd, Enormous, *and* Diſorderly Practices, *which, by a long continued neglect, and connivance of the Magiſtrates and Officers concerned, have univerſally ſpread themſelves, to the diſhonour of God, and ſcandal of our Holy Religion, whereby it is now become the more neceſſary for all Perſons in Authority to apply themſelves with all poſſible Care and Diligence to the Suppreſſing of the ſame. We do therefore hereby charge and require You, to take the moſt effectual Methods for putting*

ting the Laws in Execution againſt the Crimes above-mentioned, and all other Sins and Vices, particularly thoſe which are moſt prevailing in this Realm, and that eſpecially in ſuch Caſes where any Officer of Juſtice ſhall be guilty of any of thoſe Offences, or refuſe or neglect to diſcharge the Duty of his Place for the Suppreſſing them, that ſo ſuch Officer, by his Puniſhment, may ſerve for an Example to others. And to this end, We would have you careful and diligent in encouraging all Conſtables, Church-Wardens, Headboroughs, and all other Officers and Perſons whatſoever, to do their part in their ſeveral Stations, by timely and impartial Informations, and Proſecutions againſt all ſuch Offenders, *for preventing of ſuch Judgments which are ſolemnly denounced againſt the Sins above-mentioned. We cannot doubt of your Performance hereof,* ſince it is a Duty to which you are obliged by Oath, and are likewiſe engaged to the diſcharge of it, as you

you tender the Honour of Almighty God, the flouriſhing Condition of his Church in this Kingdom, the Continuance of His Holy Religion among Us, and the Proſperity of Your Country: *And ſo We bid you Farewell.*

Given at Our Court at *White-Hall*, the Ninth Day of *July*, One Thouſand Six Hundred Ninety One, in the Third Year of Our Reign.

By Her Majeſties Command,

To our Truſty and Well-Beloved, the Juſtices of the *Peace* for Our County of *Middleſex* at *Hicks's Hall.*

Nottingham.

THE

THE HUMBLE ADDRESS OF THE Houſe of Commons TO THE KING,

For the Suppreſſing of

Prophaneneſs and Vice.

May it Pleaſe your MAJESTY,

WE Your Majeſties moſt Dutiful and Loyal Subjects, the Commons in Parliament Aſſembled, Do, with great Joy and Comfort, remember the many Teſtimonies which Your Majeſty hath given

given us of Your Sincerity and Zeal for the True Reformed Religion, as Eſtabliſh'd in this Kingdom: And in particular, we beg leave to preſent to Your Majeſty, our moſt Humble and Thankful Acknowledgments, for the late Gracious Declaration Your Majeſty hath made to us from the Throne; That You would effectually diſcourage Prophaneneſs and Immorality, which chiefly, by the Neglect and ill Example of too many Magiſtrates, are, like a general Contagion, diffuſed and ſpread throughout the Kingdom, to the great Scandal and Reproach of our Religion, and to the Diſhonour and Prejudice of Your Majeſties Government.

Therefore, in Concurrence with Your Majeſties Pious Intentions, we do moſt humbly Deſire, That Your Majeſty would Iſſue out Your Royal Proclamation, Commanding all Your Majeſties Judges, Juſtices of the Peace, and

and other Magiſtrates, to put in ſpeedy Execution thoſe good Laws that are now in Force againſt Prophaneneſs and Immorality; giving due Encouragement to all ſuch as do their Duty therein: And that Your Majeſty would be pleaſed, to Require from Your Judges and Juſtices of Aſſize, from time to time, an Account of ſuch their Proceedings.

And ſince the Examples of Men in High and Publick Stations have a Powerful Influence upon the Lives of others; we do moſt Humbly beſeech Your Majeſty, That all Vice, Prophaneneſs and Irreligion, may in a particular manner be Diſcouraged in all thoſe who have the Honour to be Employed near Your Royal Perſon; and in all others who are in Your Majeſties Service, by Sea and Land; Appointing ſtrict Orders to be given to all Your Commanders, That they not only ſhew a Good Example themſelves, but alſo Inſpect the

the Manners of thoſe under them; And that Your Majeſty would, upon all Occaſions, diſtinguiſh Men of Piety and Virtue, by Marks of Your Royal Favour.

We do further, in all Humility, beſeech Your Majeſty, That Your Majeſty would give ſuch Effectual Orders, as to Your Royal Wiſdom ſhall ſeem fit, for the Suppreſſing all pernicious Books and Pamphlets, which contain in them Impious Doctrines againſt the Holy Trinity, and other Fundamental Articles of our Faith, tending to the Subverſion of the Chriſtian Religion; and that the Authors and Publiſhers thereof may be Diſcountenanced and Puniſhed.

And we do alſo moſt humbly beſeech Your Majeſty, That Your ſaid Proclamation may be Ordered to be Read at leaſt Four times in the Year, in all Churches and Chappels, immediately after Divine Service; and at the Aſſizes and Quarter-Seſſions of

the

the Peace, juſt before the Charge is given.

We preſent to Your Majeſty, this our moſt Humble ADDRESS, proceeding from our Duty and Zeal for the Glory of God, and to the end that all our Counſels may be bleſs'd by His Divine Aſſiſtance, and may produce Honour, Safety and Happineſs, with all the Bleſſings of a Laſting Peace, to Your Majeſty, and Your People.

THE

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Printed for the Eaſe of Magiſtrates, Miniſters, and Inferior Officers, and the Direction and Encouragement of private Perſons, who, in any part of the Kingdom, are engaged in the Glorious Work of Reformation, or are Religiouſly diſpoſed to contribute their Endeavours for the Promoting of it. *Sold, for the Benefit of the Publick, Stich'd* Four Pence, *Bound* Six-Pence.

Blank Warrants and Regiſters in Caſes of prophane Swearing and Curſing, Drunkenneſs, and Prophanation of the Lord's-Day, *&c.*

Sold by D. Brown, *without* Temple-Bar; B. Aylmer, *at the* Three Pigeons *in* Cornhill; T. Parkhurſt, *at the* Three Crowns *in* Cheapſide, *near* Mercers-Chappel; J. Robinſon, *at the* Golden Lion, D. Midwinter *and* T. Leigh, *at the* Roſe *and* Crown, *and* R. Sympſon, *at the* Harp, *in St.* Paul's-Church-Yard; T. Goodwin, *and* W. Rogers, *in* Fleet-Street; J. Walthoe, *in the* Temple; If. Harriſon, *at* Lincolns-Inn Gate *in* Chancery-Lane; S. Heyrick, *at* Grays-Inn-Gate *in* Holbourn; J. Fox, *in* Weſtminſter-Hall; *and* J. Downing, *in* Bartholomew-Cloſe *near* Weſt-Smithfield, 1700.

An Account of the

SOCIETIES

FOR

Reformation of Manners,

IN

ENGLAND and IRELAND.

IT may be hoped, That this plain Diſcourſe will meet no other Enemies than ſuch as are likewiſe Enemies to *Religion* and *Virtue*, and are loſt to the Senſe of *Good* and *Evil*, ſince the only *Deſign* of it is evidently to promote the true Intereſt of *Religion*; and it does not oppoſe any one Man's honeſt Advantage, or encounter any common Opinion, that I know of, among us: The Obſervation having been long ſince made, That how many Diſputes ſoever there have been rais'd among the too various Denominations of Chriſtians, concerning *the Power of the Magiſtrate in Matters of Religion*, with reſpect either to *Faith* or *Worſhip*, it hath never been a diſpute, Whether *the Magiſtrate hath Power to puniſh Immoralities*: The Proſecution of Men for their Vices is not reckoned Perſecution: It being as plainly the Duty of the Magiſtrate, from

the Word of God, which obliges him to *Execute*
Rom. 13 4. *Wrath upon those that do Evil*, as it is evident from the dismal Effects of Vice and Wickedness in all Ages, that Laws against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery* are necessary for the Preservation of Communities, as that *Piety* and *Virtue* are requisite to their Well-being; and that unrestrained *Vice* and *Prophaneness* are as fatal to publick Societies, as they are destructive to private Persons.

But tho' Laws are necessary to the very *Being* of Communities, and good Laws to their Happiness, yet they cannot be supposed, by any Rational Man, to be any more sufficient of themselves to procure the Welfare of the Body Politick, without Execution, than the best Medicines can procure the Health of the Natural Body, without the Use and Application of them.

If therefore the *Execution* of good Laws be necessary, as is proved, to the Welfare of Communities; and those that concern *Matters of Religion*, as do those for the Punishment of *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, are allow'd, in a Christian Country, to deserve the greatest regard, the Interest of *Religion* and the Welfare of the *Community* being so deeply concerned therein, it cannot be a matter of Dispute, whether it becomes Men, that call themselves Christians, to promote the Execution of such Laws: Nay, it cannot be well imagined, how Men can have a *Zeal* for the Service of the Great God of Heaven and Earth, or can have a *due Love* to Mankind, who have no regard to the Honour of God, or Welfare of their Country; as shall hereafter more fully appear.

Now what becomes all Men, in their several Capacities, to do, in the Promoting of the Execution of our Laws against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*,

bauchery, my Buſineſs, in the firſt place, is to ſhew is Practicable, and that it may be done by us of this Nation; * and that not only from what was done ſome Years ago, in the times of Uſurpation, but what hath been done within *Eight Years* paſt, in and about this City, and other Parts of the Kingdom.

* Admonetur omnis ætas id fieri poſſe, quod aliquando factum eſt.

It is very well known, that in the late times *Prophane Swearing* and *Curſing*, *Drunkenneſs*, *Open-Lewdneſs*, and *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, were generally diſcouraged, and ſuppreſſed. And it is as well known, to our Shame, that thoſe Sins have not only ſince revived among us, by reaſon of the Impunity of Offenders, the Countenance and Preferment they have met with, and the Contagion of great and ill Examples, but have been committed with great Impudence, and without Controul; without either Shame, or the Fear of the Laws; ſo that they were ſeen and heard at Noon-Day, and in our open Streets: and as if we were reſolved to out-do the Impieties of the very Heathens, *Prophaneneſs*, and even *Blaſphemy*, was too often the Wit and Entertainment of our Scandalous Play-Houſes, and *ſincere Religion* became the Jeſt and Scorn of our Courts in the late Reigns.

And thus *Debauchery* diffuſed it ſelf throughout the whole Body of the Nation, till at laſt our Morals were ſo corrupted, that *Virtue* and *Vice* had, with too many, changed their Names; it was reckoned *Breeding* to *Swear*, *Gallantry* to be *Lewd*, *good Humour* to be *Drunk*, and *Wit* to deſpiſe *Sacred things*; and it was enough to have rendred one ſuſpected of *Phanaticiſm*, or an abjectneſs of Spirit, and a matter of Reproach, not to ſuffer ones ſelf to be carried away with this Torrent of Wickedneſs, and not to glory in thoſe faſhionable

Vices. Nay, it was thought an unpardonable Rudeneſs, even for a *Clergy-Man*, or *Magiſtrate*, to reprove or puniſh one that was guilty of them, notwithſtanding the ſolemn Obligations of their Oaths and Vows to do it. And even after the Acceſſion of his preſent Majeſty to the Crown, tho *Popery* immediately vaniſhed, *Immorality* and *Prophaneneſs* ſtill kept their ground, as if they expected an Eſtabliſhment with our Liberties, after ſo long and peaceable a Poſſeſſion.

Reformation was indeed talkt of by ſome Perſons as an Excellent thing, and as a proper way of expreſſing our Thankfulneſs to Almighty God for his Mercies to this Nation, and to procure a continuance of them to us, and to our Poſterity: But Vice was lookt upon as too formidable an Enemy to be provok'd, and *publick Reformation* was thought ſo difficult an Undertaking, that thoſe that gave it very good Words, judged it not ſafe to ſet about it in the time of War, whilſt there were ſo many in Arms on the other ſide; and therefore they ſeemed to decline the Thoughts of it till we ſhould ſee the End of the uncertain War we were ingag'd in; tho' they were, I conceive, otherwiſe inſtructed by God's expreſs Command to the *Jews: When the Hoſt goeth forth againſt thine Enemy, then keep thy ſelf from every wicked thing.* Deut. 23. 9.

When things were in this diſmal and almoſt deſperate State, it came into the Hearts, it ſeems, of *Five* or *Six* private Gentlemen of the *Church of England*, to engage in this difficult and hazardous Enterprize, who conſidering that the higher the Tide of Wickedneſs was, the more need there was of Oppoſing it; that our crying Sins were our greateſt Enemies, and moſt threatned our Ruine; that we have Laws in Force againſt them; and that they

they ſhould have the Laws of God with the Prayers of good Men on their ſide, reſolved, whatever Difficulties they met with, to make their Efforts for Promoting the Execution of our Laws againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, and the Suppreſſing of them by adviſable Methods.

This was ſuch an Undertaking as we might well believe would ſoon alarm the Enemy, but which the Patrons of Vice would make no doubt to defeat before any Progreſs could be made; and which the prudent and wiſe Men of the World, who rely on ſecond Cauſes, with too little regard to the firſt, the Almighty Creator and Governor of the World, *with whom* (as King *Aſa* expreſſes it in his Prayer) *it is nothing to help, whether with many, or with thoſe that have no power*, would look on with Pity, if not with Deriſion; and ſo it proved, that the Champions and Advocates of Debauchery put themſelves in Array to defend their wretched and infamous Liberties; they ſet themſelves to ridicule, to defame, and to oppoſe this Deſign, and to overthrow the hopes and expectations of the Undertakers: And ſome others, whom in Charity we would not look on as Enemies of Religion and Virtue, tho' we cannot eaſily eſteem them our Friends, whoſe Conduct has ſo greatly obſtructed the Progreſs of this Deſign, conſulting Humane Prudence, or rather Worldly Policy, too much, and perhaps their own Obligations too little, were very forward to cenſure theſe *Attempts* as the effect of an imprudent and an unſeaſonable Zeal: But notwithſtanding a furious Oppoſition from Adverſaries, the ill Offices of thoſe from whom better things might have been expected, and the unkind Neutrality of Friends, theſe *Gentlemen*, who in a little time began to add ſome

2 Chron. 14 11.

others to their Number, not only kept their Ground, but made farther Advances; for our late Excellent QUEEN, of Glorious Memory, having this Affair laid before Her, in the Abſence of the King, by a Prelate of great Learning and Fame, (the * late Biſhop of *Worceſter*) She had juſt Sentiments of it, and therefore thought it became Her to give it Countenance; She Graciouſly condeſcended to thank thoſe who were concerned in it, and readily promiſed them Her Aſſiſtance; and afterwards, upon this Application made to Her Majeſty, She was pleaſed to ſend Her * *Letter to the Juſtices of Middleſex*, commanding them to *put the Laws againſt Prophaneneſs and Vice in Execution with all Fidelity and Impartiality*; *and to this end, that they ſhould be careful and diligent in encouraging all Perſons to do their part in giving Informations againſt Offenders, as they were obliged by their Oath, as Magiſtrates, to do*; and when there was further occaſion, She ſhew'd She was in earneſt to promote this Deſign, by taking other more effectual Methods for that purpoſe. But as it may well be ſuppoſed, That the Queens patronizing of theſe Endeavours could not but give Credit and Strength to them; ſo the Affair, by Her Death, (it may as eaſily be imagined) muſt loſe a great Advantage: But yet the Loſs (tho' it appeared exceedingly great) did not diſcourage thoſe that were ingaged in this Enterprize. For as they at firſt ſet about it with little or no Expectation of ſuch a Patroneſs, becauſe they thought it would be an acceptable Service to the King of Kings, and that it would promote the true Intereſts of Religion, and the Welfare of their Country: So the ſame Conſiderations obliged them to purſue their Deſign with equal Vigour and Zeal, tho' they were deprived

* The Right Reverend Dr. *Stillingfleet.*

* July 9. 1691.

deprived of ſo great a Friend and Protector. And Divine Providence by this time ſeemed to favour their Endeavours, by the great and remarkable Succeſs that had attended them; for Multitudes of Offenders had been by their means brought to Puniſhment. The publick Oppoſition that was at firſt made to their Undertaking was broke through, (which the Lord Biſhop of *Glouceſter*, who hath been a great Encourager of this Undertaking, gave an Account of in his *Vindication* of it, which, it may be wiſhed, there may never be any further Occaſion to remember) and the Honeſty of it had recommended it to the Virtuous and Unprejudiced part of the Nation, whom the Account of theſe Matters had reached; the Enemy, after a ſevere Examination, having not been able to diſcover, that any illegal Methods had been uſed, or that any ſecular Intereſt was purſued by thoſe, who beſtow'd their Time and their Pains in carrying on ſo ungrateful and hazardous a Work, as that of *Reformation* will be always found, ſince it is the Oppoſing of ill Men in their ſinful Indulgencies, which are often more deſirable to them than their very Lives. With theſe Encouragements they proſecuted their Buſineſs, increaſing their Number by the Addition of Perſons of conſiderable Note, and of the beſt Character; ſome of whom, tho' they were of different Opinions from thoſe of the *Eſtabliſh'd Church*, as to ſome points concerning Religion, were willing to unite their Strength in the common cauſe of Chriſtianity, and engage in ſo Noble a Deſign, that had done ſo much Good: By whoſe *joint Endeavours* great Advances have been made towards a *Reformation of Manners*, which is every day getting ground, Perſons of *various Ranks*, of *conſiderable Fortunes*, and of the

clearest Character, offering Assistance to it, not only in and about the City of *London*, but from several Parts of the Kingdom.

But since it hath been long desired, that a more distinct and clear View may be given to the World of this *Undertaking*, and of the *Advances* of it, which those that have been principally concerned in it (so industriously consulting Privacy) have not hitherto been prevailed on, by any Temptations, either of Vanity or Resentment, to make publick, being more desirous that it should be known by the good Effects it produces, than by any *History* or *Narrative*; I ask leave to present the World with a *short Scheme* of the *Design*, and some *Account* of the *Managers* of it, that the well-disposed part of the Nation, that have hitherto been Strangers to it, may, by the Knowledge thereof, be induced to join in so good a Work, and now especially, since this Conjuncture is so favourable to it, beyond our Expectation.

There is a very large Body of Persons, compos'd of the *Original Society* before-mentioned, with the Additions that have been since made of Persons of Eminency in the *Law*, *Members of Parliament*, *Justices of Peace*, and considerable *Citizens of London* of known Abilities and great Integrity, who frequently meet to consult of the *best Methods* for carrying on the Business of *Reformation*, and to be ready to advise and assist others that are already ingaged, or any that are willing to join in the same Design.

This *Society* is at a considerable *Yearly Charge* for the effectual managing their Business; but takes no Contributions of any but their own Members, by

by whoſe Endeavours, as was ſaid before, Thouſands of Offenders in *London* and *Weſtminſter* have been brought to Puniſhment for *Swearing*, *Drunkenneſs*, and *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*; and a great part of the Kingdom has been awakened, in ſome meaſure, to a ſence of their Duty in this reſpect, and thereby a very hopeful Progreſs is made towards a *General Reformation.*

A *Second Society* is of about *Fifty* Perſons, *Tradeſmen* and others, who have more eſpecially applied themſelves to the Suppreſſion of *Leudneſs*, by bringing the Offenders to legal Puniſhment: Theſe may have actually ſuppreſſed and rooted out about *Five Hundred Diſorderly Houſes*, and cauſed to be puniſhed ſome *Thouſands* of *Lewd Perſons*, beſides *Swearers*, *Drunkards*, and *Prophaners of the Lord's-Day*, as may appear by their *Printed Liſts* of Offenders. Theſe Perſons, by their prudent and legal management of their Buſineſs, have received great Countenance and Encouragement in our *Courts of Judicature*, and very particular Encouragement and Aſſiſtance, for ſeveral Years paſt, from the *Lord-Mayor* and *Court of Aldermen*, who are ſenſible of the great Service that is done by them, which they expreſs upon proper Occaſions.

A *Third Society* is of *Conſtables*, (of which ſort of Officers care is taken to form Yearly a new Body in this City) who meet to conſider of the moſt effectual way to diſcharge their *Oaths*, to acquaint one another with the *Difficulties* they meet with, to reſolve on proper *Remedies*, to divide themſelves in the ſeveral Parts of the City, ſo as to take in the whole to the beſt Advantage, for the inſpecting of *Diſorderly Houſes*, taking up of *Drunkards*,

kards, *Lewd Perſons*, *Prophaners of the Lord's-Day*, and *Swearers* out of the Streets and Markets, and carrying them before the Magiſtrates; and I muſt obſerve, that this is found a very ſucceſsful Method for Conſtables to take, for the Suppreſſing of the abominable Sin of **Swearing**, when private Perſons are negligent in giving of *Informations*, and the Magiſtrate is careleſs of his Duty.

A *Fourth* Rank of Men, who have been ſo highly Inſtrumental in this *Undertaking*, that they may be reckoned a *Corner-Stone* of it, is of ſuch as have made it ſome part of their Buſineſs to give *Informations* to the *Magiſtrate*, as they have had Opportunity, of ſuch Breaches of the Laws as were beforementioned. Many of theſe Perſons have given the World a great and almoſt unheard of Example, in this corrupt Age, of *Zeal* and *Chriſtian Courage*, having underwent, at the beginning more-eſpecially of theſe Proceedings, many *Abuſes*, and great *Reproaches*, not only from exaſperated and hardned Offenders, but often from their lukewarm Friends, irreligious Relations, and ſometimes from **Unfaithful Magiſtrates**, by whom they have been reviled, brow-beaten, and diſcouraged from performing ſuch important Service, ſo neceſſary to the Welfare of their Country. And herein theſe brave Men have acted with ſo great Prudence, as well as Zeal, that fore-ſeeing it might one day be the Policy of the Enemy of all Goodneſs, and the Buſineſs of wicked Men, who are his Inſtruments, and who could not generally be brought to *Shame* and *Puniſhment* for their infamous Practices but by their means, to raiſe Prejudices in the Minds of bad and unthinking People againſt them, and to diſparage their Proceedings, by whiſpering of Jealouſies

Jealouſies of their being influenced in what they did by Worldly Conſiderations; That the World may be challenged to make appear, That theſe *Societies* have been ſo much as treated with, by any Perſon whatſoever, to give *Informations* with any Promiſe of a Reward, or that they have ever received the leaſt Advantage by any Convictions upon theſe Statutes againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, the Money ariſing thereby being wholly appropriated to the Poor, except the third part of the Penalty upon the Statute againſt *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, which, in ſome Caſes, the Magiſtrate hath a bare Power to diſpoſe of; but was never, that we know of, received by any one of theſe Perſons; which I thought fit to obſerve, as a laſting Anſwer to any Objection of this kind, in Juſtice to them who have gone through *Frowns* and *Reproaches* for the ſake of doing ſo much good; and that all Men may ſee with how great Reaſon it is, both from the Character of the Perſons concerned in the diſcharging of this Service to Religion and their Country, as well as from the Nature and Neceſſity of it, (which I ſhall hereafter enquire into) that the Name of an *Informer* is now become much more glorious among wiſe and good Men, than it was grown contemptible by the ill Practices of ſome in our days: And that it does therefore appear *truly honourable* for Perſons of the *greateſt Quality* to give Informations in theſe Caſes, for the Service of the moſt High God, as ſome among us, of *greater Ranks* than the World does perhaps think of, have of late done; and which, it hath been obſerved, in divers *Diſcourſes* lately publiſhed, that even Princes under the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation were not aſhamed to do. *Now when theſe things were done, the Princes came to me, ſaying, The People of Iſrael,* Ezra 9. 1, 2.

Iſrael, and the Prieſts and the Levites have not ſeparated themſelves, from the people of the Lands, doing according to their Abominations, &c.

There are *Eight* other regulated and mixt Bodies of *Houſe-keepers* and *Officers*, in the ſeveral Quarters of *London*, *Weſtminſter*, and *Southwark*, who differ in their Conſtitution from thoſe before mentioned, but generally agree in the Methods of inſpecting the *Behaviour* of *Conſtables* and other Officers, and going along with them, and aſſiſting them in their Searching of *Diſorderly Houſes*, in taking up of *Offenders*, and carrying them before the *Magiſtrate*, and alſo in giving *Informations* themſelves, as there is Occaſion.

Beſides thoſe before-mentioned, there are about *Nine and Thirty Religious Societies* of another kind, in and about *London* and *Weſtminſter*, which are propagated into other Parts of the Nation; as *Nottingham*, *Glouceſter*, *&c.* and even into *Ireland*, where they have been for ſome Months ſince ſpreading in divers Towns and Cities of that Kingdom; as *Kilkenny*, *Drogheda*, *Mannouth*, *&c.* eſpecially in *Dublin*, where there are about *Ten* of theſe *Societies*, which are promoted by the *Biſhops* and *Inferior Clergy* there. Theſe Perſons meet often to *Pray*, *Sing Pſalms*, and *Read the Holy Scriptures* together, and to *Reprove*, *Exhort*, and *Edifie* one another by their *Religious Conferences*. They moreover carry on at their Meetings, Deſigns of *Charity*, of different kinds; ſuch as Relieving the *Wants* of *poor Houſe-keepers*, maintaining their *Children* at *School*, ſetting of *Priſoners* at *Liberty*, ſupporting of *Lectures* and *daily Prayers* in our *Churches*. Theſe are the SOCIETIES which our

our late Gracious Queen, as the Learned Biſhop that hath writ an *Eſſay* on her Memory tells us, took ſo great Satisfaction in, *That She inquired often and much about them, and was glad they went on and prevailed*; which, Thanks be to God, they continue to do; as the Reverend Mr. *Woodward*, who hath obliged the World with a very particular Account of the *Riſe* and *Progreſs* of them, hath lately acquainted us. And theſe likewiſe are SOCIETIES that have proved ſo exceedingly ſerviceable in the Work of REFORMATION, that they may be reckoned a *chief Support* to it, as our late Great Primate Arch-Biſhop *Tillotſon* declar'd, upon ſeveral Occaſions, after he had examined their *Orders*, and inquired into their *Lives*, *That he thought they were to the Church of* England.

The Biſhop of *Salisbury's* Eſſay on the Memory of the late Queen, *p.* 118.

I might now give an Account of a *Society of Miniſters* of the *Church of England*, for carrying on of this Work, and another *Agreement* of *Juſtices of the Peace*; but I am with-held at preſent by ſome Conſiderations from deſcending to any further *Particulars* concerning them; and muſt content my ſelf with ſaying what will be eaſily allow'd, That the *ſtated Meetings* of ſuch Perſons are as proper, and may be more uſeful for the Promoting of this Work, than any other I have deſcrib'd. For what might we not expect from the *Zealous Endeavours* of theſe *Orders* of Men in this Affair? which, 'tis obvious, will not be employ'd with ſo great Effect, as when they form themſelves into *Societies*, or at leaſt have *frequent* and *ſtated Times* of Meeting, for the Proſecution of this Buſineſs. 'Tis true, that *Miniſters* and *Magiſtrates* have far greater Advantages, as well as more particular Obligations, than others, (as I ſhall hereafter endeavour

deavour to make appear) to be ſerviceable in this Work of *Reformation*; but yet, when they act alone in this Contention between *Virtue* and *Vice*, tho' they will do great good in our preſent Circumſtances, and much more than they will eaſily believe till they are heartily engaged in it; yet they muſt expect to be under Diſadvantage on ſome Occaſions, as well as other ſingle Perſons, who exert their Zeal without a Communication with one another, and particularly when they encounter Combinations of wicked Men, which, it is not unlikely, will ſometimes happen. Do we not ſee by what Methods the Men of the World propagate Wickedneſs, and countermine good Deſigns? Is it not by their Clubs and Confederacies? Are we not ſenſible with what Advantage our Civil Concerns are carried on by Companies and Corporations? Nay, Does not the Account before us convince us of the great Uſefulneſs, or rather Neceſſity, of good Mens *confederating* and *meeting* frequently together, to concert *Methods*, and *Encourage* one another in this difficult Work of Confronting and Suppreſſing of bare-fac'd and inſolent Wickedneſs? And that the Reaſon why good Men have not ſooner or more generally done it, may be, becauſe *the Children of this World are in their Generation wiſer than the Children of Light*. Since therefore *Union* and *Method* ſeem evidently to give good Men much the ſame Advantage (abſtracting from the Conſideration of the Goodneſs of their Cauſe, and the Divine Aid that they may expect) in their juſt and brave Oppoſition to *Prophaneneſs* and *Immoralities*, againſt the greater Number, 'tis to be feared, of the Wicked, as Diſcipline and good Ground in War gives a ſmall Body of Men againſt a very unequal

Luk. 16. 8.

equal Number of thoſe that are undiſciplin'd, and with diſadvantageous Ground: 'Tis highly to be wiſhed, That not only *Societies* of *Miniſters* and *Magiſtrates*, but of all other *Degrees* of Men, were ſet up in Proſecution of this Deſign, in all Parts of the Kingdom, more eſpecially in all Towns, Cities, and Corporations. And it may charitably be hoped, that there are but few, if any, ſuch Places, where there are not to be found *Three* or *Four* Perſons at leaſt, of one or other Denomination of Chriſtians, that have a Zeal for God and Religion, who may eaſily *form* themſelves into a *Society*, which may enlarge by degrees, and which will, probably ſpeaking, go a great way towards the Suppreſſing publick Diſorders where they are; but may have a marvellous Effect, with God's Bleſſing, for this End, where there is a *Magiſtrate* that makes a Conſcience of his *Duty*, or a *Miniſter* that encourages *Reformation*; as would be manifeſt to any that had obſerved in how ſhort a time, and to what a degree, open Wickedneſs hath been checkt, where a *zealous Miniſter* hath given himſelf the Trouble, I might rather have ſaid the Pleaſure, of meeting ſometimes a *Society* of his Pariſhioners, to encourage their Zeal and Conſtancy in this Work of *Reformation*, even where the Magiſtrates have been either open or ſecret Enemies to it. The *Advantages* moreover are too many to be inſiſted on in this place, for the Exerciſing of our own Graces, and the Confirming our Virtuous Diſpoſitions, by our *Aſſociating* with our Fellow Chriſtians for the carrying on Religious Deſigns, in an Age when Chriſtian Converſation, which hath an ineſtimable Value with Men of Religion, is with ſuch difficulty met with. The *Forming* therefore of good Men into ſuch pious Combinations,

tions, for the over-balancing thoſe of Vice, the countermining the contrary Attempts of all wicked Men, and recovering the Power, as well as Form of Religion, is moſt earneſtly recommended to all the Friends of Piety and Virtue. And methinks it may be expected from all, that have any ſincere regard to God's Honour, their own and their Country's Happineſs, that they ſhould exert themſelves, in their ſeveral Capacities, with a noble Zeal and Emulation, for the Perfecting of this great Undertaking. And now eſpecially the Times of Peace are returned, which we have been told, are the Times of *Reformation*, ſurely none that carry the Face of Chriſtians can with Confidence offer new Excuſes any longer to poſtpone it; we may now hope for the Aſſiſtance of ſome, at leaſt, of the cautious and prudent Men amongſt us, who have hitherto, with great Gravity, ſtood Neuters in this Affair, and that they will at laſt anſwer the Expectation of good Men from them, and ſuffer the Generations to come to call them Bleſſed. 'Tis at leaſt to be hoped, that if they are too Great and Wiſe to engage in the Work themſelves, they will not however obſtruct it more than the open Enemies of it can do, by their calling it an *Impracticable Undertaking*, whiſpering groundleſs Jealouſies of the Deſign, or uncharitable and diſadvantageous Characters of the Perſons concerned in the Promoting it; but rather, that they will let the World ſee that their Zeal is engaged in the carrying on of wiſer Methods, for the Effecting of a *National Reformation*. And one would think, that the employing our Labour or Authority in this *Noble Deſign*, of being inſtrumental in doing good to Multitudes of Souls, by Suppreſſing of National Sins, and, by conſequence, the Reviving

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the Power and Reputation of Religion, and thereby preventing National Judgments, ſhould be more worth the Concern and Application of Chriſtians, and ſhould afford a more true and ſolid Satisfaction than the purſuit of our Worldly Intereſts or Pleaſures. All indeed are not capable of being ſerviceable in the ſame way; but whether it be by *Executing the Laws*, or by *Preaching*, *Diſcourſing*, *Writing*, *Informing*, *Setting up of Societies*, or otherwiſe contributing towards it, which way ſoever it be that we can further this glorious Work, it will, I think, be hard to find a good Excuſe for any that ſhall decline their Concurrence, according to their Advantages and Opportunities, in an Undertaking which it would become the greateſt Man upon Earth to promote, * which is now ſo far facilitated by the *Schemes* that are laid, and the *Methods* it is put into.

* See the Help to a National Reformation, lately publiſhed.

We have ſeen ſome *few Perſons* ingaging in this Enterprize before they had any *Methods* to direct them, or many *Examples* to incourage them, encountring Oppoſition in the firſt forming their Deſign, from open Enemies, and perhaps falſe Friends, ſuffering cruel *Mockings*, unkind *Cenſures*, and unjuſt *Reproaches*, and yet not giving way. We have ſeen them ſurmounting their greateſt Difficulties, ſo that the main brunt ſeems now near over, and going on with that Reſolution and Succeſs, that the *Deluge of publick Wickedneſs* is viſibly abated. We are told, that many *Thouſands* have been brought to Puniſhment for *Swearing* and *Curſing*, by their means, *Seventy* or *Eighty* Warrants a Week having been executed on theſe Offenders, in and about this City only, ſince the late *Act of Parliament* againſt *Swearing* and *Curſing* was made, which hath given ſo great and remark-

able a Check to those scandalous Sins, that our Constables sometimes of late have found it difficult to take up a *Swearer* in divers of our Streets and Markets, where, within a few Years past, horrid Oaths, Curses, and Imprecations, were heard Day and Night; that a multitude of *Drunkards*, and *Prophaners of the Lord's-Day*, some of whom kept as it were open Markets within a few Years past, have been made Examples by their means; * that *Hundreds* of *Disorderly Houses*, which were little better than Stews, and Nests for Thieves, Clippers and Coiners, *&c.* have been rooted out and suppressed; and that some *Thousands* of *Lewd Persons* have been Imprisoned, Fined, and Whipt; so that the *Tower*-end of the Town, and many of our Streets, have been much purg'd of that pestilent Generation of **Night-Walkers**, that us'd to infest them, which were a Reproach to this Noble City, and a Scandal to Christianity, *Forty* or *Fifty* of them having been sent in a Week to *Bridewell*, where they have of late received such Discipline, that a considerable Number of them have chose rather to be transported to our Plantations, to work there for an honest Subsistence, than to expose themselves, by their lewd way of living, to Shame and Punishment, to Poverty and Disease, to all sorts of wicked Practices, and the danger of the Gallows, to which, in the Conclusion, they are often, if not generally, brought. And I may justly add, That far greater things, by the Application of the *Original Society* of *Gentlemen*, have been accomplished, than what have yet been mentioned, and such as I am not permitted at this time to discover. But thus much may be said, That the *Endeavours* of those *Gentlemen* have not been confined to this City

* See the printed Accounts of the Number of these Offenders that have been Yearly punished.

City and Kingdom, but have extended as far as *Ireland*, where they have had an Influence, very little, I think, to the Honour of that Kingdom, from whence it had its firſt Riſe; of which, ſince a more particular Account may be expected, I may ſatisfie my ſelf, at preſent, with ſaying in general, of my own Knowledge, That the *Tranſactions* of *Reformation* here having been, near *Two Years* ſince, laid before ſome few Perſons in *Ireland*, and moſt of thoſe (I muſt again obſerve) *private Perſons*, and of the *lower Rank* of Men, with proper Conſiderations to move 'em to unite in the ſame Deſign, and Methods to purſue it with Advantage, it determined them to engage heartily in it: and they have proſecuted it with ſo much Vigour, that there are now ſeveral *Societies for Reformation* in the City of *Dublin*, which I am aſſured, by divers Accounts that I have in my hands from thence, are ſpreading into ſeveral Parts of the Kingdom, and are encouraged by his Excellency the Earl of *Galloway*, (one of the Lords Juſtices of *Ireland*) the Right Reverend the *Arch-Biſhop* of *Dublin*, many of the *Clergy*, and the beſt of the *Magiſtrates* and *Gentlemen* of that City: In *One* of which *Societies*, moſt of the *Pariſh-Miniſters* of *Dublin*, ſeveral of the pious *Biſhops*, particularly the celebrated *Arch-Biſhop*, and divers other *Perſons of Quality*, are Members; ſome of whom have ſhewn a Zeal, which if it prevailed the Three Kingdoms over, might ſoon produce a glorious Reverſe of the State they are now in, and which in leſs than *Two Years* ſpace hath ſucceeded, tho not without ſuch various Oppoſitions, as might be expected, from Combinations of bad Men, to that degree in *Dublin*, that the *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, by *Tipling* in publick Houſes, by Exerciſing of *Trade*, and Expoſing of

Goods to Sale, is almoſt ſuppreſt; that *Lewd Women* are ſo ſtrictly enquired after, and ſeverely puniſhed, that they have tranſported themſelves, as in *England*, to our Plantations; and that *Swearing* is ſo run down, that an *Oath* is rarely heard in their Streets; ſo that publick Diſorders are remarkably cured, and, in ſhort, Vice is afraid and aſhamed to ſhew its head, where, within a few Years paſt, it was daring and triumphant.

We are likewiſe aſſured, That *Scotland* hath concurred in theſe Matters, where His Majeſty's *Proclamation* againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery* hath been iſſued out in very ſtrict terms, and His late Gracious *Letter* to the *Parliament* of that Kingdom takes notice of the *Progreſs* that they have made in the *Forming* of *Methods* for the Diſcouraging of *Vice* and *Irreligion*, and aſſures them, *That 'tis a* WORK *moſt acceptable to Him.*

But to return to our own Nation. We are made acquainted, That many *Societies*, and *Bodies* of Men, of different *Ranks* and *Perſwaſions*, are engaged in this Work, to which Men of Virtue, of Temper, and unblemiſhed Reputation, may either join themſelves, according to their Quality, Circumſtances, or Opportunities, or may form themſelves into *new Bodies:* That the publick Oppoſition that was made to it, which our Poſterity may bluſh to read of, is at an end, which, 'tis to be hoped, will be the laſt that we ſhall hear of in a Chriſtian State, and under a Proteſtant Government: That the City of *London* eſpouſes it, where there are *Two Sermons* Quarterly Preached, and divers of them Printed, to make Men ſenſible of their Obligations in this reſpect. And it's true alſo,

alſo, That *Swearing* is much leſſened, as we have reaſon to believe, by the Accounts we receive in moſt, if not in all Parts of the Kingdom, as other publick Diſorders are in many; and that *Societies for Reformation* have been in divers Places already actually form'd, and are going on in many others; as particularly in *Glouceſter*, *Leiceſter*, *Coventry*, *Shrewsbury*, *Hull*, *Nottingham*, *Tamworth*, *Newcaſtle*, *Cheſter*, and ſeveral other Corporations; ſo that in a few Months time, by the Methods that are now taking, there is reaſon to believe that we ſhall hear of a very conſiderable Progreſs in this Work from all Parts of the Nation. And now is this a time for Men, that would be reckoned Chriſtians, to ſtand Neuters in an Affair wherein their Religion, their Country, and their Poſterity, are ſo deeply concerned? Let the Men who can contentedly ſee the Laws of God trampled upon; who can, in their ordinary Converſation, in the Streets, and even at their own Tables, hear horrid Oaths and Curſes, nay, Men calling upon God for Damnation upon themſelves and others; in a word, offering high Indignities to the Glorious Majeſty of their great Creator, conſider, whether the very Heathens, who would not ſuffer their Artificial Deities to be affronted, or their Religion to be deſpis'd; who, in Sieges, and other Diſtreſſes from their Enemies, were more concerned for their Images and Altars than for their own Houſes, or private Affairs, do not condemn them? Let our Learned Rabbies, the great Diſputers of the World, and all that make a Profeſſion of Religion, but give little better account of it than by expreſſing a fierce and uncharitable Heat againſt thoſe that differ from them in ſome things relating to Religion, but not eſſential to it, and wherein all

Men equally wiſe and good have, I doubt, never yet been fully agreed, think ſeriouſly with themſelves, whether they might not employ ſome ſhare at leaſt of their Parts and Zeal to much better purpoſe, in furthering the Reformation of Mens Lives, and of the Manners of the Nation, by the Suppreſſing of Prophaneneſs and Vice, than by raiſing or keeping up, with an unchriſtian Temper, to the manifeſt Injury of the Chriſtian Religion, which is an Inſtitution of Love, dangerous or unneceſſary Controverſies or Diviſions, and making of Proſelytes to their new Opinions or Party; all Religions being, I think, agreed, that bad Men are a Scandal to the beſt Religion, and that they cannot, if they continue ſo, be ſaved in any; and conſequently, that the being inſtrumental in the bringing over of a few Souls to the ſincere Practice of Piety and Virtue by any Chriſtian Methods (which thoſe I am treating of will, I hope, be allowed to be) is of greater Service to the Chriſtian Religion, and the World, than the gaining of Hundreds that are vicious to any *particular Church* or *Party*. But can Men of Conſcience ſatisfie themſelves with complaining of the Iniquities of the Age, and wiſhing for Reformation, with giving only ſome good Words to theſe Proceedings, or even praying for God's Bleſſing upon them, without doing, as they have Opportunity, what is neceſſary to promote them, when, as it hath been ſaid, we have the Laws of God, of the Nation, and, as we have reaſon to hope, the Government on our ſide; and moreover, ſo many Examples, and ſo great Succeſs, to encourage us, and have now, generally ſpeaking, not much more to fear than Calumnies and hard Words, and moſt of thoſe, 'tis to be hoped, from the Enemies of God and Goodneſs, which the beſt

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of Men, and the beſt Deſigns in all Ages, have ever met with, and which, in ſuch a Caſe, it is our true Glory to ſuffer? No. Surely this is a Time, as I ſhall endeavour to make appear, for all good Men to join their Hearts and Hands, their Intereſt and Authority, in this ſo Neceſſary, ſo Great, and ſo Glorious a Work.

Having now laid before the *Reader* a ſhort Scheme of this Undertaking, which was begun with great Oppoſition, in a Time that was diſcouraging to ſuch an Enterprize, and with ſuch other circumſtances of diſadvantage, as new things, be they never ſo wiſe and good, eſpecially Attempts of this kind, generally meet with, and yet hath been advanced to ſuch a conſiderable degree, from ſo contemptible a Beginning, as it muſt appear to have had to the Wiſe and the Wary among us, who do not duly conſider, that there is a God that rules in the Kingdoms of Men, and who, as the Prophet expreſſes it, *giveth Power to the faint; and to them that have no Might encreaſeth Strength.* Iſa. 40. 29. My next Buſineſs is to enquire, whether there are any *Orders of Men* among us, who are under more particular Obligations to be zealous and diligent in Promoting *a publick Reformation of Manners.*

And, in the firſt place, I humbly ask leave to lay this Matter before the moſt Reverend Order of the *Clergy*, beſeeching them, with all that due Reſpect which all good Men ought to have to their High and Holy Function, to conſider, if what is endeavoured to be proved to be the *Common Duty* of *all Men*, and the *Special Obligation* of *Kings*, *Governours*, and *Magiſtrates*, be indeed ſo, it is not the particular Province of thoſe, *who have entred*

Act.20. 28. Ezek.3.17, 18, 20. *into the Places of Overſeers and Watchmen; and of whom the Blood of thoſe that die in their Sins, if they knowingly ſuffer them to ſleep in them, will be required,* to teach and inculcate theſe Duties as well as others. And if any of their Body, after this Matter is plainly laid before them, and they are convinced 'tis their Duty to be diligent in the furthering it, wilfully neglect to excite all ſorts of People, eſpecially thoſe belonging to their Charge, of what Rank or Quality ſoever, to do their Duty likewiſe in promoting, in their reſpective Stations, the Execution of the Laws againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, they can give a good Account of their Conduct to thoſe of their particular Charge, who have no concern to diſcharge their Duty herein, only for want of their being admoniſhed of it, and are not Partakers, in ſome degree, in the common Guilt of the Nation, which, as our Neglect of our Duty in this particular Inſtance, of not Promoting a *Reformation*, will encreaſe; ſo it may be a means, notwithſtanding our preſent reſpite from Deſtruction, to draw down God's Judgments upon the Kingdom, if we continue to make no better uſe of the Peace we have with our Neighbours, than to fight, with our crying Enormities, againſt our God; which, as I think, few Nations, if any, have had, in theſe laſt Ages, greater reaſon to dread; ſo, I ſuppoſe, all will grant, that none ſeem to have greater reaſon to uſe all proper means to prevent, than thoſe who expect to give Account not only for their own Sins, but *for the Sins of ſo many others beſides, if they wilfully ſuffer them to periſh in them, by their refuſing to uſe the neceſſary means of preventing their living and dying in them.*

I ſhall not, after I have humbly repreſented this Affair to this Sacred Order, think fit to enquire, whether

whether there hath been any Neglect on the part of their Body, or any one Member of it, in a matter wherein Religion is ſo highly concerned: I ask leave rather to ſay, That I am aſſured, upon unqueſtionable Information, that moſt of the Right Reverend the Biſhops have expreſſed their Approbation of the *Societies of Reformation* I have given an account of; that I have never heard of the Name of any one of theſe Reverend Perſons that hath not done it upon an humble Application made to them for their Countenance and Encouragement of them; and that divers of them, to my own certain Knowledge, have promoted them, and continue to do it, as a conſiderable Number of the Clergy in and about this City, as well as in other parts of the Kingdom, have done likewiſe; ſome of them by Preaching, and frequently meeting to conſult one another upon this Occaſion; and others of them by giving Informations themſelves to the Magiſtrates againſt prophane Perſons; among whom, the generous and remarkable Aſſiſtance that was given in this Affair by the two late Eminent Divines, Dr. *Horneck* and Dr. *Jekell*, whoſe Deaths are ſo much lamented, under the various Obſtructions and Diſcouragements they encountred in the Proſecution of it, which thoſe pious Men made ſuch diſmal Reflections upon, as I ſhall under our preſent Circumſtances forbear to repeat, does demand a particular Acknowledgement in this place, and deſerves to be tranſmitted to after-Ages, when the Names of ſuch as diſcourage Endeavours of *Reformation* may either be forgot, or be remembred with Ignominy. And I not only ſubmit what I have ſaid on this Head of the *Clergy*, and this whole *Diſcourſe*, to This Reverend Body, which, I think, I ſhall never obtain of my

ſelf

ſelf to Publiſh without the Approbation of ſome of the pious Members of it; but out of a ſenſe of my own Defects, and the tendereſt regard I would always have to matters of Religion, I heartily deſire, if I am ever prevailed on to publiſh it, a publick Correction from them of any thing I have ſaid in theſe Papers through Weakneſs or Inadvertency; (which, I hope, all the Advantages of the World would not have prevailed on me, if they could have been offered me, to have ſaid knowingly) that may not be warranted from the Holy Scriptures, or that does give Offence to any but thoſe whom the Repreſentation of their Sin, or their Duty to them, and Religion it ſelf offends; whoſe Sentiments of this Diſcourſe as I have no reaſon to ask, their Cenſures of it I may know how to value.

And I muſt the rather make this humble and ſolemn Addreſs to them for a ſpeedy Cenſure of theſe Papers, if there is any juſt Occaſion for it; and that at the ſame time they would be pleaſed to put this glorious Cauſe, that I have here repreſented with no more Skill, in a better light, which, I conceive, would well become the moſt celebrated Writers of the Age to do, not only becauſe Errors in general, as well as Diſeaſes, are better prevented than cured after they are ſpread; but becauſe upon a long Conſideration and a full Knowledge I have had of the *Undertaking* I have treated of, and of the *Steps* by which it hath been carried on from the very Beginning, I cannot but believe that the Virtuous part of the Nation, when it is laid before them, will conclude that there is abundant reaſon for their Concurrence and Aſſiſtance in it, and will think, that either the Happineſs or Miſery of this Kingdom may with great ground be expected from

from either the Succeſs or the Diſcouragement that theſe and other pious and juſt Endeavours for a *National Reformation* meet with. My Buſineſs, in the next place, is to conſider the *Magiſtrates Obligation* to be diligent in the *Execution of the Laws* againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*.

It will, I think, be allowed, That Government is of Divine Appointment, and that the Power of Magiſtrates, whether it be that of the Supream, or that of thoſe that are Inferior and Subordinate, is derived originally from God. St. *Paul* ſpeaking of the Magiſtrate, ſays, he *is the Miniſter of God to thee for Good.* Rom. 13. 4. *There is no Power but of God: The Powers that be, are ordained of God.* Rom. 13. 1. And *Moſes* ſpeaking to the Judges of the People of *Iſrael*, ſays, *Hear the Cauſes between your Brethren, and Judge righteouſly between every Man and his Brother. Ye ſhall not reſpect Perſons in Judgment, but you ſhall hear the Small as well as the Great; you ſhall not be afraid of the Face of Man, for the Judgment is Gods.* Deut. 1. 16, 17. *Take heed* (ſaid *Jehoſhaphat* to his Judges) *what ye do: for ye judge not for Man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the Judgment. Wherefore now, let the Fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it: for there is no Iniquity with the Lord our God, nor reſpect of Perſons, nor taking of Gifts. Thus ſhall ye do in the Fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect Heart.* 2 Chron. 19. 6. Ver. 9. From whence we may, I think, conclude, without adding any further proof of what is ſo generally confeſt, that Magiſtrates do act by God's Authority, are his Miniſters or Inſtruments, which he maketh what uſe of he pleaſes in the Governing the Natural and Rational World; that they are to act for his Honour, and the Good of his People; and that He will call them to account for their Behaviour in this reſpect. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. Accordingly,

for

1 Tim. 2. 1, 2. *for Kings, and for all that are in Authority*, the Apoſtle does particularly direct, *That Supplications, Prayers, Interceſſions, and giving of Thanks be made, that under them we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godlineſs and Honeſty.* For our King therefore, and all ſorts of Magiſtrates, does it not behove us to pray, That God would be pleaſed to inſpire them with Zeal for his Glory, and the Good of his People, and particularly to direct and aſſiſt them in this neceſſary and moſt weighty Affair of *Reformation?*

And as the Magiſtrate's Power is primarily and originally from God; ſo is the Office and Power of Subordinate Magiſtrates immediately and viſibly conferred upon them as a weighty Truſt, by their Prince, and their Country, which they have an Obligation to the faithful Diſcharge of, in their natural Allegiance and Fidelity; but this Obligation riſes yet higher; they are bound yet cloſer to the faithful Diſcharge of their Office by a *Solemn Oath*, relating to their particular Truſt, as well as by the *Oath of Allegiance.* Now the Obligation being thus great and various muſt, I think, neceſſarily draw the dreadful Guilt of Perjury, as well as Breach of Truſt, upon thoſe, who being thus entruſted and obliged to execute the Laws, do wilfully neglect to do their Duty: For a Juſtice of the Peace takes this Solemn Oath at his Entrance into that Office:

Dalton's Country Juſtice, *p.* 13. *c.* 4. *That in the County of —— in all Articles in the King's Commiſſion to him directed, he ſhall do legal Right to the Poor, and to the Rich, after his Cunning, Wit, and Power, and after the Laws and Cuſtoms of the Realm, and the Statutes thereof made*, &c. Wherein he is firſt obliged to *do Right*, which regards very much the Puniſhment of Offenders, as appears more

more fully in his *Commiſſion*; and this equally reaches *Rich* and *Poor*. The *whole County* is aſſign'd in the *Oath*, as the Extent of his Juriſdiction, and therefore his Authority is not confin'd to a part; he is not tied up to act only in any leſſer Diſtrict of it; but is to iſſue out his Warrants againſt Offenders upon Informations offered him by Perſons that live never ſo remote from him in the County, or for Offences committed in any part of it; which, tho 'tis ſo obvious from the very Words both of the *Oath* and *Commiſſion*, I thought fit to take notice of, leſt if we ſhould have any Magiſtrates that ſhould think it too much to give themſelves the Trouble to look into the Diſorders of any kind that are committed even in their own Pariſhes, to ſuppreſs them when they hear or obſerve them any-where elſe; as *Swearing* and *Curſing*, for Inſtance, in *Bowling-Greens*, *Coffee-Houſes*, and other publick Places; *Drunkenneſs*, *Lewdneſs*, and *Prophanation* of the *Lord's-Day* in the *Taverns* and *Streets*; or that ſhould unwillingly receive Informations from others of them, they ſhould, in either of theſe Caſes, be tempted to think thoſe worthy Magiſtrates too officious, and take the Liberty to ſpeak of them as ſuch, who, by inſpecting into theſe Diſorders, where-ever they hear of them, in any part of the County, and by giving Encouragement to thoſe that bring them Informations of ſuch Offences, (which will in conſequence draw a more than ordinary Attendance upon them of ſuch Perſons on this Occaſion as live at a diſtance from them) will thereby make their Unfaithfulneſs in their Office the more remarkable. He is obliged to *do Juſtice, according to the Laws, Statutes, and Cuſtoms of the Realm.* He is not then to break the Laws himſelf,

or

or to ſuffer others with Impunity to break them. He is to diſcharge his Office according to his *Underſtanding* and *Ability*: But can any be ſuppoſed to be of ſuch weak Abilities, as not to know that Offenders ought to be puniſhed, when legal Informations are offered them, or when Offences are committed before them? If then any Magiſtrates can diſcourage thoſe who are ſo much Friends to their Country, as to bring them Informations againſt Offenders, can refuſe to convict upon them, or can ſee and hear one another break God's Laws, and the Laws of their Country, at their Diverſion, and their own Tables; what is more directly contrary to their Office and Truſt? What becomes of the Oaths that are upon them? In how many Inſtances do they notoriouſly break them? And if the Violation of a Private Truſt is juſtly eſteemed baſe and deteſtable, how much higher Aggravations muſt their Offences admit of, who break a Publick one, ſo Solemnly taken upon them? And certainly Perjury, that is of ſo black a nature in its ſelf, is not a leſs Enormity, or leſs Infamous, in a Magiſtrate, than it is in one of an inferior Order.

The Commiſſion for a Juſtice of the Peace alſo ſets forth, *That he is to conſerve the Peace in ſuch or ſuch a County, and to keep, as well as cauſe to be kept, all Ordinances and Statutes made for the Good of the Peace, and the Conſervation thereof, and for the Quiet, Rule and Government of His Majeſty's People, and in all and every the Articles thereof, according to the Force, Form, and Effect thereof, to chaſtiſe and puniſh all Perſons in the ſaid County offending againſt the Form of theſe Ordinances and Statutes, or any of them in the County, &c.*

Dalton's Juſtice, *p.* 18. *c.* 5.

It

It deſerves our Obſervation, That as the * *Roman* Government, the † *Lacedæmonian* and ‖ *Athenian* Common-Wealths, provided by their Laws againſt ill Magiſtrates, kept, when they flouriſhed, vicious Men out of their Magiſtracy, and entruſted thoſe with the Execution of their Laws that would ſhew ſuch a Behaviour to others as they expected from them. So our Government hereby ſtrictly requires the Magiſtrates to give a good Example. 'Tis a mighty force that Example hath; one can hardly conceive any thing, on the one hand, ſo fooliſh and unaccountable; and on the other, ſo difficult and brave, as that Men may not in a great degree be led to by it. Good Example hath often the advantage of Humane Precept, of Admonition or Reproof, and ſometimes of the Exerciſe of publick Juſtice, or private Authority, which, beſides that they are not always practicable, have often too little Influence upon the Mind; but good Example hath a great and ſecret Charm to draw others to Imitation. It attracts and aſſimilates by a Power, of which we cannot give a full Account, tho' by ſhewing Virtue as it were viſibly, it hath undeniably thereby a great Advantage of other Me-

* Populus Romanus delegit Magiſtratus, quaſi Reipublicæ Villicos, in quibus ſi qua prætera eſt ars, facilè patitur, ſin minus virtute eorum & innocentia contentus eſt, *Tullii Oratio cum Plan.*

† Virtus in primis apud Lacedæmonios circa Magiſtratûs legendos ſemper ſpectata. Quod Politicum præceptum in quavis Republica ſervari ex uſu eſſet, *Nic. Cragius de Repub. Lacedæmoniorum, p.* 83.

‖ Inter præcipuos Athenienſium Magiſtratus cenſendi ſunt annui Novemviri. Oportebat in eorum vitam inquiri, antequam Magiſtratum capeſſerent, *Petitus de Legibus Atticis* 236. Tantam honeſtatis curam his Novemviris voluit eſſe Solon, ut ſi quis Archon vino ſe ingurgitaverit, capital ei fuerit ex hac lege. Τῷ ἄρχοντι μεθύων λύφδην θάνατος ἔστω ἢ ζημία. Jurabant in leges ſe eſſe obſervaturos Novemviri. Jusjurandum Novemvirorum: Leges obſervabo, quod ſi ſecus fecero, auream ſtatuam meam æqui ponderis pendam, *Petitus de Legibus Atticis* 140. Ἄρχοντες ὀμνύουσι δικαίως ἄρχειν καὶ δώρων μὴ λήψεσθαι, &c. *Heracl. Pont. de Politiis Athenienſium.*

thods

thods of Instruction; * those things being allowed to make a much deeper and longer Impression upon our Minds that are represented to us by our Eyes, than those that are admitted by our Ears. Precepts, tho they are in the general not only highly useful, but necessary, are not always clear, and when they are understood, the Efficacy of them, of Admonition and Reproof, seems often to be more or less according to the Example of them that give them; such Persons are lookt on as a Reproach to Religion, and unquestionably do often give bad Men a further Aversion and Prejudice to it, that do not practise themselves what they recommend in their Discourses. As the Christian Religion does therefore strictly oblige all its Proselytes to shew a good Example, by a strict Observance of its Precepts; so it does more especially inculcate upon those whose particular Office it is to teach others their Duty, their endeavouring to perswade them to it by their own good Example, as well as by their Doctrine, * *that they may thereby both save themselves, and those that hear them*; and when this is wanting, † *when they say, but do not*, how exceedingly mischievous the consequences of it are, highly deserves serious Consideration. The Heathen Moralists could observe the great Mischief that was done the World by Mercenary Masters of Precept, by whom they meant those * *that endeavoured to talk elegantly of just things, but not to do them*; and that it was not the Discourses, but the good Examples; not the Schools, but the Manners of Philosophers, that made their best Disciples what they were, and so much celebrated. † *I knew* (says *Plato*) Socrates *by his good Works, more than by his good Words*; * and

* Segnius irritant animos dimissa per aures, quàm quæ oculis subjecta fidelibus.

* 1 Tim. 4. 16.

† Mat. 23. 3.

* Τὰ δίκαια μὲν ἐσπουδακέναι λέγειν, πράττειν δὲ οὐδαμῶς.

† Σωκράτοις δ' ἐγὼ τῶν μὲν λόγων οὐκ ἔμπειρός εἰμι ἀλλὰ πρότερον, ὡς ἔοικε τῶν ἔργων ἐπειράθην, καὶ ἐκεῖ, &c. Laches, p. 487.

* and he makes it a neceſſary quality of a good Orator, *that he himſelf be Juſt and Virtuous.* † And accordingly *Socrates* (his Maſter) being asked what he thought to be the beſt Inſtruction, anſwered, *Eupraxie*, or *well-doing.* Example hath indeed ſuch a power, that Men are in a great degree too often ſuch as thoſe are with whom they converſe, as even the Proverbs of many Nations have obſerved: So that he that gives a good Example, tho' he be but a private Perſon, does, in truth, a publick Service, and lays an Obligation upon the Age he lives in: But the good Examples of *Governours* and *Magiſtrates* (I need not add of *Miniſters*) have a far greater force of Perſwaſion; their Virtues are generally derived, by Imitation, into the Manners of the People. * How fatal an Influence more-eſpecially muſt then the vicious Examples, which the corrupt Nature of Man does with ſo much Eaſe comply with, of Superiors, of Perſons in Authority, whoſe particular Province it is to look to the Execution of the Laws, have upon thoſe below them? Theſe Men carry not only thoſe of their Neighbourhood, but a great part of the Counties they live in, after them; many of whom, 'tis very obvious, are apt to think it an Excuſe, if not a Warrant, to tranſgreſs after their Example. The Commiſſion of a Juſtice of Peace does therefore with great

* Οὐκ οὖν ἀνάγκη τὸν ῥητορικὸν δίκαιον εἶναι, τὸν δὲ δίκαιον βούλεσθαι, δίκαια πράττειν. Gorg. fol. 460.

† Ἑρομένου δέ τινος αὐτὸν τὶ δοκοίη αὐτῷ κράτιστον ἀνδρὶ ἐπιτήδευμα εἶναι, ἀπεκρίνατο εὐπραξίαν. Stob. fol. 49.

* Quales ſummi civitatis viri fuerint, talis civitas erit. Ut enim vitiis & ſceleribus Magiſtratuum infici ſolet & corrumpi tota Reſpublica, ita corrigi & emendari. Τὴν σεαυτοῦ σωφροσύνην παραδεῖγμα τοῖς ἄλλοις καθίστη, γινώσκων ὅτι τὸ τῆς πόλεως ὅλης ἦθος ὁμοιοῦται τοῖς ἄρχουσι. Nec ignores totius civitatis mores ad exemplum Magiſtratuum conformari, *Iſocratis Oratio ad Nicoclem, p.* 41.

reaſon tell him, *That he is to keep himſelf, as well as cauſe to be kept, all the Ordinances and Statutes, &c.* As his giving a good Example is a likely way to procure a due regard to his Office, to maintain his Authority, and, with the Exerciſe of it, to reform others; ſo, on the contrary, his giving a bad Example is as effectual a courſe to teach others to break the Laws, * and to bring a Contempt upon his Office, and the Government it ſelf, as can eaſily be thought of. I needed not to have been thus long upon this Head of *Example*, and particularly the *malignant Influence* of the bad Examples of Magiſtrates and great Men, if moſt Ages did not abound with ſuch unhappy Inſtances; and if this Nation, in particular, had not felt ſo much the fatal Effects of them, as may be ſome Excuſe for my inſiſting on it. But to go on: Beſides the Miſchief that is done by the vicious Examples of Magiſtrates, with what reaſon can we expect, that thoſe that make no Conſcience to break the Laws, ſhould diligently and conſcientiouſly execute the Laws upon others? And ſuppoſing ſuch Magiſtrates ſhould ſometimes, either out of a fear of the Inſpection of the Government into their Behaviour, in the Reign of a Prince that is zealous in the Diſcouraging of Vice; or out of a deſire of keeping up their Reputation with better Men, be ſometimes enclined to puniſh ſuch Offences in others as they are themſelves guilty of, conſciouſneſs of their own Faults will, when they act upon no better and firmer Principles, deprive them of Courage, and be very apt, upon many Occaſions, to draw them back from the Puniſhing of others, eſpecially when the Offenders are either their Superiors or Equals; whereas the Law knows no reſpect of Perſons; and they whoſe Buſineſs it is to

* Sine bonitate nulla Majeſtas. Ἄρχουσιν ἢ ὀφειλομένη αἰδὼς καὶ τιμὴ φυλασσομένη, κόσμον σώζει πόλεως καὶ διατηρέει.

to execute it, must do it without Distinction or Partiality. Their Commission tells them, that they are *to chastise and punish all Persons in the said County offending.* And can any that consider this, That we live under a Christian Government, and that the Apostle acquaints us, That the Magistrate *is the Minister of God for Good*; That *he beareth not the Sword in vain*; *Is a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that does Evil*; and that Christians should have a far greater Concern for the Honour of God, than for the Honour of their Prince, their own Reputation or Estates, but think, that the Laws that relate to Piety and Virtue are to be chiefly regarded by the Magistrate; that his principal Care should be applied to the restraining Men, even those of the highest Rank, from openly breaking those Laws, by a strict and impartial Execution of them, since the Reasonableness of the Punishing of Men for the Violations of Religion seems to have been evident by the Light of Nature? It being, I think, a just Observation of the Heathen Philosopher, * *That tho' several Nations do appoint several Punishments for the Violation of Religion, yet it does not in any Country go wholly unpunished.* No Mens Quality ought to shelter them from Punishment in this Case; even *Privilege of Parliament* does not give those who are allowed it for the Service of their Country, the mischievous Liberty to trample upon the Laws of God and their Country, nor will excuse Magistrates from acting according to their Oaths in these Matters. Charity and good Manners would forbid us, if such a Case had never been heard of, or was like to happen, to suppose that this Privilege should ever be pretended, on such an Occasion, by any one of

Rom. 13. 3. Ver. 4. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14.

* Adversus maleficium omne consensimus. Homicidii, veneficii, parricidii, violatarum Religionum alicubi, atque alicubi diversa pœna est: sed ubique; aliqua. *Sen. de Beneficiis. lib.* 3. c. 6.

thoſe Bodies, who, as they * make Laws againſt *Debauchery* and *Prophaneneſs*, ought likewiſe to endeavour, by their own exemplary Behaviour, to promote Piety and good Manners, to give Laws of Civility to the reſt of the Nation; and to add, that if theſe things do happen, good Magiſtrates, 'tis to be hoped, will act as become them. And there is, I think, no doubt but the bringing to legal Puniſhment a Man of Title or Authority, that makes uſe of his Power or Intereſt to be more vicious, and to do greater Miſchief to the World than others, is a greater Service to Religion and our Country, and more highly honourable among Men, than the Puniſhing of a private Perſon, perhaps than many poor Creatures, who, as hath been long obſerved, generally ſuffer the Extremity of the Law for ſuch Offences as their Neceſſities are a Temptation to them, tho' not a Reaſon for them, to commit, when great Men, that cheat whole Provinces, and bid defiance to Sacred things, go unpuniſhed, if they are not rewarded. † If Hiſtory can tell us of Heathens that could do

* Receptumq; omnium pene Gentium, temporumq; memoria, ut ad legum latarum obſervantiam invitarentur inferioris ſortis homines, exemplo potentum, qui primi eas cuſtodire cogebantur, & præſertim illi ipſi qui eas tuliſſent.

Magiſtratus, Gubernatores, Regeſque obediunt quoque ipſi legibus, id eſt, rectæ rationi. *Diodorus Siculus è Roſino.*

Sua lege docui, nil aliud præcipi debere, niſi quod prius quiſque ſibi impetraverit. *Val. Max. lib.* 8. *c.* 6. *Tit.* 3.

Præceptum ſalubre Pittaci ſapientis apud Auſonium: Pareto legi quiſque legem ſanxeris. *Roſinus de Anti. Rom.*

† Si quis convictus furti eſſet apud Locrenſes, effodiebantur ei oculi. Contigit autem ut Zaleuci filius furti reus convitiaretur; cui quum Locrenſes pœnam remitterent, non tulit id pater, ſed ſibi unum, filio alterum, voluit erui oculum. *Her. Pont. de Pol. Tenediorum.*

Legem quandam Tenediis tulit Tennes, quâ licebat, Adulterum deprehenſum ſecuri necare: Quum itaque filius ejus eſſet captus, interrogante regem qui ceperat, Quid ei faciendum? Reſpondebat, Lege utendum: quapropter & nummo ejus ab una parte ſecuris excuſa, ab altera facies viri & mulieris uno collo juncta. *Her. Pont. de Pol. Locorum.*

and

and ſuffer ſo much for the Maintenance of the Laws of their Country, ſhall it be ſuppoſed that the fear of diſobliging a Man of Intereſt, that hath a ſwelling Title, one that is I doubt, improperly called a Man of Honour, who affronts and contemns Religion, ſhould keep Chriſtian Magiſtrates from Executing the Laws of their Country, that are made for the Support of Religion, and to which they are Sworn? And yet, as unworthy and unaccountable as ſuch a Behaviour may appear to be, even by the Light of Nature, *it were well, if for the Honour of Chriſtian Magiſtrates, nay, even of Humane Nature, that it could be denied, that many, I am unwilling to ſay moſt of the Magiſtrates in the late Reigns, lived and died with their Commiſſions, without putting any one of the Laws, that our more virtuous Anceſtors had left us againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, in Execution, which ſome of the worthy Magiſtrates of this Reign, making a Conſcience of Diſcharging the Oaths they have taken, and the Truſt that is repoſed in them, by their Perſonal Watchfulneſs and Diligence, as well as by their giving due Encouragement to thoſe who, without having Oaths to oblige them, or Rewards to encourage them, bring them Informations of the Breaches of thoſe Laws, which were grown almoſt obſolete and uſeleſs, have, to their great Honour, ſo ſucceſsfully done, with ſuch Oppoſition and Difficulty; and not only with greater Clamour from hardned Offenders, but with more Reflection from too many others, than they might have met with if they had been breaking them in the moſt impudent manner, had been making Attempts to deſtroy them. To prevent therefore, for the future, the Miſchief that this Nation may otherwiſe fall under, as it hath done, by the

* Pudet hæc opprobria nobis Et dici potuiſſe, & non potuiſſe refelli.

Unfaithfulneſs of Magiſtrates, it may deſerve Conſideration, whether it would not be highly adviſable,* that, as we are told, the *Romans* for this reaſon ordered their Magiſtrates to give an Account of their Diligence for the Maintenance of the Laws to their Cenſors, † a chief part of whoſe Office it was, to look to a Reformation of Manners; and as our Magiſtrates are, by the late *Act of Parliament* againſt *Swearing* and *Curſing*, required to keep Liſts of thoſe Perſons that they have convicted of thoſe Offences, and to return them to the Seſſions; our Magiſtrates ſhould be likewiſe further obliged, to bring in to our Judges of Aſſize, or to the Quarter-Seſſions, Liſts of ſuch as they have convicted upon all the Statutes againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, which Method will, I humbly conceive, not only be effectual for the quickening the Diligence of Magiſtrates, but give a juſt Terror to Offenders, and will afford the Government a means of knowing what Magiſtrates are Unfaithful in their Office, * and deſerve Diſcountenance and Puniſhment; and, on the contrary, who they are that moſt honourably diſcharge their Truſts, do the greateſt Service to their Country, and deſerve the higheſt Regard from it. And can any, unleſs they are faithful and zealous Miniſters of the Goſpel, be ſuppoſed to deſerve more Reſpect than thoſe Magiſtrates that conſcientiouſly apply themſelves to the Suppreſſing of Vice and Prophaneneſs, and to the Promoting of Religion?

* Cogunt eos qui Magiſtratu abierint, apud Cenſores edere & exprimere quid in Magiſtratu geſſerint, *Gothofredus de duo. Tabul. Frag.*

† Cenſorum Officium erat deſcribere facultates cujuſque Civis, obſervare ſingulorum hominum mores & vitam, tollere quoque omnia quæ probitati morum peſtem & perniciem illatura videbantur, *Roſinus de Antiquitatibus Rom. fol.* 520. Cenſores mores populi regunto. Hæc detur cura Cenſoribus, quandoquidem eos in Republica ſemper volumus eſſe, *Cicero de Leg. p.* 340.

* His autem duobus, præmiis & pœna, ſalus Reipublicæ quamplurimum continetur. Solon Rempublicam duabus rebus contineri dixit præmio & pœna, *Cic. ad Br. Ep.* 27.

As

As the doing of this is, I conceive, the greateſt Benefit of Magiſtracy, and may be ſuppoſed, as hath been ſhewn, to be a great End for which it was appointed, ſo it can't, I think, be doubted, but God's Bleſſing may attend his Ordinance, the Magiſtrates zealous and united Endeavours for this purpoſe, ſo that they may ſucceed to the Spiritual good of particular Perſons, as well as to the good of the Publick; that as Afflictions are often ſent by Him, to awaken Men out of their Lethargy in their vicious Courſes, and in the nature of them tend to that end, the legal Corrections of Offenders, which may be looked on as Afflictions, may, with God's Bleſſing, work the ſame happy Effect upon them; and the rather, ſince they are the immediate and ſenſible Effects of their Sins; and of this, we are told, there have been ſo many happy Inſtances ſince the beginning of theſe Tranſactions, as may be ſufficient, without other Conſiderations, to encourage the Magiſtrates Diligence: But when this fails of the deſired Succeſs upon particular Perſons, yet it is a vaſt Advantage to the Cauſe of Religion in general, to keep the Multitude, by the ſtrict and exemplary Puniſhment of ſome Offenders, from the publick Commiſſion of ſuch ſcandalous Sins as waſt the Conſcience, affront Religion, and directly tend to bring it into Contempt, that, as the Scripture expreſſes it, *All Iſrael may hear, and fear, and do no more any ſuch Wickedneſs.* For conſidering the Original Corruption of our Nature, which is generally more depraved by our Education in a degenerate Age; that being thus depraved and weakned, we find it no very eaſie work to reſiſt Temptations to Sins, to which we have either habituated our ſelves, or have a natural propenſity, when they are naked Deut. 13. 11.

and alone; and that 'tis much more difficult to encounter thoſe Sins when Temptations to them are made ſtronger by the bad and eminent Examples which are almoſt every-where to be ſeen in our Commerce with the World, there being but few that we meet with that do not recommend one Vice or other by their Example to our Imitation, and (which is, I think, ſtill worſe) moſt of thoſe not ſuch as profeſs themſelves Enemies of Religion, but that pretend themſelves Chriſtians, entertain hopes of receiving the Benefits of Religion, and attend its Ordinances with Allowance, as often as they think it for their Intereſt or Reputation to do ſo; conſidering, I ſay, theſe things, have we not great reaſon to fear, that moſt Men will continue to go over to the major Party, that triumph in Wickedneſs, and that few will have the Courage and Bravery to join with the leſſer and too much deſpiſed Party of Virtue, to go againſt the Stream of a Debauched Age, (which, for ought I can ſee, there is greater likelihood that it ſhould ſtill grow more ſtrong, and furious, than that it ſhould abate) till frequent and publick Examples of Vice are taken out of publick View by either the Execution of our Civil Laws, or by the Revival of the ancient Diſcipline of the Church. *Seneca* could, it ſeems, obſerve, That it was enough to ſhake the Reſolution of a *Socrates*, or a *Cato*, to bear up againſt and ſtem Vice, when it becomes ſo general and faſhionable, that it preſſes upon us with a kind of publick Authority. And tho' Chriſtians have a clearer Revelation than thoſe Heathens had of their Duty, higher Obligations, nobler Motives, and greater Aſſiſtances to perform it, yet, I conceive, our Religion does not teach us, nor our own Experience of Humane Frailty

Frailty does not encourage us to make the way to our Duty and Happineſs as difficult as we can. 'Tis true, as may be objected, that Men are by no means to be ſuppoſed Religious, who are reſtrained from their Vices only by ſenſe of Shame, or fear of Humane Puniſhment; but yet they muſt be thought to be in a much fairer way of being ſo under thoſe Reſtraints, than they would be without them. By their being kept by Humane Laws from an Indulgence of their vicious Inclinations, they may in time find the Pleaſure and the Advantage of the Reſtraint: And bad Examples, that abound in moſt places, which I take to be the great Occaſion of Sin, being by this means taken away, Vice will become ſcandalous, and Virtue will be in proportion eſteemed faſhionable: and thus, I think, very great points are gained. For when Men that are vicious in their Inclinations, and even thoſe that are grown old in Senſuality, ſee plainly that Religion gives Men Eſteem and Advantage, as Debauchery and Irreligion hath too much done within our Memory, and they find that the Stream is turned, and bears hard againſt them, that they cannot commit their Diſorders with *Impunity*, nor without *Shame*; and moreover, Temptations to them are very much taken out of the way, then they will take ſome pains to be Virtuous, at leaſt to appear in the Dreſs of Virtue; then may we expect that ſuch Men will begin to enquire into the Nature and Reaſons of Religion, and when they find, by a ſober Advertence to its Propoſals, (which they will now make without Prejudice) and by ſome Experience they will have of the happy Effects of it, by their endeavouring to imitate it, that it prohibits us thoſe things that would be moſt highly injurious to us, and allows a Satisfaction to our rational Appetites; that

that it hath ſuch Excellencies as out-bid and put out of countenance all the Advantages that the World can offer; that it fortifies us againſt the croſs Occurrences and Calamities, the Changes and Storms of Life, and the Fears of Death, diſarms it of its Stings and Terrours; to ſay no more, that it ſilences the bitter Remonſtrances and ſtinging Reproaches of Conſcience, delivers us from Plagues and Fears, Confuſion and Sorrow, from the tormenting Guilt, and the cruel Uſurpation and Outrages of our Luſts and Paſſions, and gives us in Exchange the noble Pleaſure of the Victory over our ſelves, who are our worſt Maſters, the Joys of Innocence, the Triumphs of a good Conſcience, and the Extaſies of Heavenly Hopes, and directs us to the Regions of Bliſs, to *Joys unſpeakable and everlaſting*: Then may it be that the good Diſpoſitions, which we may call the Seeds of Virtue, which ſeemed before as it were choak'd in ſome with ill Habits, may (with God's Bleſſing) be awakened, and revive; and that others, who had ſome weak Inclinations to Religion, but had not ſtrength enough to bear the Contempt that now too often, if not generally attends the ſincere Practice of it, to go in an untrodden way, againſt the Tyranny of Cuſtom and Example, may take courage: Then may we hope to ſee Virtue, that hath been ſo long ſlighted and oppreſſed, drawn out of its Obſcurity, delivered from that Contempt which the Prevalency and Inſolence of Sin hath flung upon it, and imbittered it, be admired, embraced, and enthroned. So that the Magiſtrates taking away out of publick View Examples of *Prophaneneſs* and *Debauchery*, by a ſtrict Execution of the Laws, ſeems as proper, if not as neceſſary a means for the keeping of Vice from the further ſpreading its Contagion,

Contagion, and the retrieving of Virtue, as the preventing of those that have the Plague upon them from mixing with those that are not infected, and shutting of them up is necessary to the stopping the Raging of that Distemper; and, as it is not to be doubted, that where those that have the Plague visibly upon them, are allowed to converse promiscuously with the Sound, even to walk publickly in the Streets, it must be a certain sign that the Distemper is Epidemical, that there is little hopes of putting a stop to it, or that those whose proper Business it is to shut up and take care of the Diseased, are themselves infected with the Distemper; so it must in like manner be thought to be when there is no care taken of the moral Diseases of a State, when publick Prophaneness and Vice not only go unpunished by the Magistrate, but are triumphant. From hence therefore 'tis evident, that such Magistrates as diligently discharge their Office are not only instrumental in doing good to particular Persons, but to the Publick, and may be so of a General Reformation, and do therein what we have ground to believe is highly acceptable to God; for thus saith God by the Prophet, *Them that honour me I will honour; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.* And accordingly we are told in the Holy Scriptures how acceptable to God the Zeal of *Phinehas* was, in Executing of Judgment upon *Zimri* and *Cosbi*; *Behold, I give unto him my Covenant of Peace, and he shall have it, and his Seed after him, even the Covenant of an Everlasting Priesthood, because he was Zealous for his God*, &c. And the *Psalmist* tells us, That *it was accounted to him for Righteousness unto all Generations for evermore.*

1 Sam. 2. 30.

Numb. 25. 12, 13.

Psal. 106. 31.

But

But now ſince His Majeſty's late *Proclamation*, and the *Addreſs* of the Houſe of Commons to His Majeſty, do not only give us too great reaſon to fear, that all Magiſtrates will not duly conſider this as they ought, but plainly tell our Magiſtrates, *That their Negligence and Unfaithfulneſs in their Office is the great Cauſe of the Debauchery and Prophaneneſs of the Kingdom:* It may not be indecent or improper in this place to ſhew, in ſome Inſtances, how Magiſtrates may be liable to this Imputation.

And firſt, ſuch Magiſtrates as can take ſuch ſolemn Oaths, and accept of ſuch Truſts, without any ſerious Intention to diſcharge them, who, tho' they are not vicious themſelves, can obſerve, without any concern, the Breaches of God's Laws; nay, in the courſe of many Years do not exerciſe their Authority, by any one ſingle act, for the Puniſhing and Suppreſſing of the horrid Indignities that are daringly and almoſt in all Places offered to the Great God of Heaven and Earth, at the ſame time that they are very ſenſible of, and do highly reſent any Affronts that are offered their Prince, and even their own Perſons: *Or thoſe that are ſo wonderfully gentle and flexible, ſo over-run with Pity, that they can diſcharge Impious and Debauched Wretches upon any common Pretences, their Cries or Complaints, or the ſcandalous Interceſſions of their powerful Advocates, tho' frequently brought before them, and often with great difficulty, by faithful Officers, or zealous Informers. †As the inflicting of Puniſhment on ſuch Offenders is what Magiſtrates are ſtrictly obliged to, and is moreover what a juſt Compaſſion to Criminals and the Community doth loudly call for: So, on the contrary, this Gentleneſs to them, which I have deſcribed, is a great

*Magiſtratus aut Judex neque pro juſtis orari, neq; pro injuſtis exorari debet.

†Hæc tria lex ſecuta eſt, quæ princeps quoque ſequi debet, aut ut eum quem punit, emendat, aut ut pœna ejus cæteros meliores reddat, aut ut ſublatis malis ſecuriores cæteri vivant. *Sen. de Clementia, lib. 1. cap 2.*

great Injuſtice, and may, I think, be reckoned among thoſe Mercies that *Solomon* tells us are cruel.

* It muſt at firſt naming appear to thinking Men a fooliſh and criminal Pity, a great Cruelty to the Offenders themſelves, and the Community. To the *Offenders* themſelves, who, by being ſuffered to paſs unpuniſhed in their wicked Courſes, generally go on, frequently grow obſtinate in them, and often bring on themſelves, with the Permiſſion, or by the Judgment of God, far greater Sufferings in this World than the legal Puniſhment of them would have amounted to; the Ruine of their Eſtates, Families, Health, a ſudden or a ſcandalous Death by publick Juſtice, and without Repentance, Everlaſting Deſtruction in the World to come; all which the timely and wholſome Puniſhment of them by the Magiſtrate might have been a means of preventing. * But this Gentleneſs is a Cruelty and great Injuſtice to the *Community*; for hereby publick Juſtice is obſtructed, and triumph'd over, Magiſtracy is deſpiſed, the † Government it ſelf is diſparaged and weakned, National Guilt, which calls for National Puniſhment, is contracted, thoſe that are either already actually vicious, or that have vicious Inclinations, are encouraged to continue, or to engage in ill Courſes, which the Body of the People groan under the ſad Effects of, by the continual Sufferings of one kind or other that are by this means brought upon them. And thus other Mens Sins ſeem to be made, in ſome ſenſe, the Sins of Magiſtrates, according to that known ſaying, **That he that permits Offences to be committed, which he hath Power and Opportunity to prevent, doth in ſome ſort command them to be done*; or in Scripture Phraſe, Magiſtrates hereby ſeem to be *Partakers in others Sins.* Out of a ſenſe whereof, a former Prince

* Sicut eſt miſericordia puniens, ita eſt crudelitas parcens. Salutaris ſeveritas vincit inanem ſpeciem clementiæ.

* Clementiores lege judices eſſe non oportet.

† Legum ac Magiſtratuum contemptum ſequuntur populi ſeditioſæ voces, & adverſus Principes ipſos conjurationes ac defectiones, *Bodin. Rep. lib.* 3 *c.* 1.

* Qui non prohibet peccare cum poteſt, jubet.

Prince of this Nation is reported to have ſaid, upon his hearing that a Perſon whom he had par-
Gen. 9. 6. doned for one Murther, againſt the expreſs Word of God, had committed another, *That he himſelf Murthered the ſecond Perſon, by Pardoning the Offender for his firſt Offence.* Such Magiſtrates then as theſe are plainly Acceſſory to the Debauchery of the Nation; as, in the next place, thoſe muſt be thought to have been, if there have been any ſuch, who have been ſo far from applying themſelves, as their Oaths oblige them, to the Execution of the Laws againſt Prophaneneſs and Vice, that they have uſed their Skill and Diligence to diſcourage and hinder thoſe of their own Body in doing their Duty, who have had the Honeſty and Zeal to diſcharge it, by making it troubleſome and difficult to them, by muſtering up, upon Occaſion, fallacious Arguments, even the common Excuſes of Criminals againſt their Proſecution and Puniſhment. As for Inſtance; If they ſhould have urged againſt the Puniſhing of Men for *Swearing* and *Curſing*, that 'tis too ſevere to make Men Examples for Words, which, tho' they ſhould not be uſed, may fall from them unawares, without an ill Intention, and without Injury, no Man being ſuppoſed to be the worſe for another Man's prophanely wiſhing him Damnation; and if Men are accuſtomed to ſuch Language, or likewiſe to *Drunkenneſs* or *Lewdneſs*, 'tis difficult to break Habits, eſpecially of ſuch Vices to which we have Temptations from our corrupt Nature; and therefore to puniſh Gentlemen for theſe Offences ſeems to be ill Breeding, as well as Severity, and to tend moreover to the deſtroying of Converſation, and to the making of Life an inſipid thing; and to execute the Laws againſt *Vice* and *Prophaneneſs*

neſs upon Men of an inferior Rank, is to diſable them to pay Taxes, for the Support of the Government; the Reſtraining more-eſpecially of ſome of them from frequenting of *Ale-Houſes* and *Taverns* on the *Lord's-Day*, and others of them from the Permitting of *Tipling* in thoſe Houſes, is the direct way to leſſen His Majeſty's Revenue ariſing by Exciſe, *&c.* If ſuch Arguments as theſe ſhould have been made uſe of by Magiſtrates in this, or in the former Reigns, to obſtruct the Suppreſſion of theſe Enormities, it will be readily confeſſed by Men of any virtuous Principles, *That ſuch Men plainly fall under the Charge of being a great Cauſe of the Debauchery of the Nation.* But having been led beſides my Intention to name theſe fallacious and ſcandalous Arguments, and particularly the laſt and moſt ſpecious of them that concerns the *Exciſe*, I ask leave of my Reader, leſt we ſhould have any ſuch Men among us as ſhould be ſo over-run with Concern for the Supplies of the Government, as to have little or no Concern for their Duty to their God, or Regard to his Providence over-ruling Kingdoms, and ſhould not therefore be ſenſible of either the Impiety or Abſurdity of theſe Arguments, to put ſuch in mind, That if the poorer ſort of Men are allowed to ſpend all, or a great part of their Money, in Taverns and Ale-Houſes, they will not be in a very good Condition to maintain their Families, or to pay Taxes, which ſuch Men are, upon this Occaſion, I doubt, chiefly concerned about; or that if Men of a ſuperior Rank have Money enough to maintain their Families, and diſcharge their other Obligations, and to ſpare, and they have no better Inclinations than to carry it to thoſe Houſes, they have time enough to ſpend

it

it in them on the other ſix days of the Week, without doing it upon the *Lord's-Day*, to the Neglect of their Duty to their Families, and the manifeſt Danger of the Ruine of their own Souls; or that, laſtly, if a conſiderable Number of ſuch Houſes, many of which are Stews or Receptacles for High-way-Men, Coiners, and Pick-Pockets, were ſuppreſſed, as they ought to be by Law, we ſhould therein act agreeably to the common Reaſon of Mankind, as well as to the Wiſdom of our Anceſtors, who, from a ſenſe of the great Miſchief that is done the Publick, by ſuffering an unneceſſary Number of Publick Houſes; the true and reaſonable Deſign and Uſe whereof are, as is obſerved in the Preamble of one of our Statutes, *for the Entertainment of Travellers, and for the Convenience of Day-Labourers and poorer Perſons*, and not for a Refuge for idle and vicious People, thought it neceſſary to diſcourage the Encreaſe, and to reſtrain the exceſſive Number of them by the Laws made for this purpoſe: If this, I ſay, was now done, there would be enough left as might be ſufficient not only to anſwer the reaſonable Uſes of them, but to ruine, as 'tis not, I think, to be doubted they actually do, many more Families than are ſupported by them; and the Perſons that keep ſuch diſorderly Houſes, as they might be much more honeſtly employed, ſo more uſefully to the Publick, in ſome other way of Living than in this Employment, which ſeems above moſt others deſtructive to it. From a Conſideration whereof we may ſuppoſe it was, that our late Gracious Queen, in the Abſence of the King, did ſignifie by the Right Honourable the Lord Chancellour of *England*, to the Juſtices of *Middleſex*, whom his Lordſhip ordered to wait on him upon this

1 *Jac. Reg. cap.* 9. *Co.* 832.

11 *Hen.* 7. *cap.* 2. 5 & 6 *Ed.* 6. *cap.* 25.

this Occaſion, (as by their *printed Order* made in *May* 30. 1693. purſuance of it may appear) That it was Her Majeſty's Pleaſure that they ſhould uſe their utmoſt Diligence to prevent the Frequenting of *Ale-Houſes* and *Taverns* on the *Lord's-Day, as well out of time of Divine Service as in*, by putting the * Laws made againſt Tipling in thoſe Houſes in ſtrict Execution, which they are ſince put in mind of by His Majeſty's late *Proclamation*. But ſuch Objections as theſe have ſo little appearance of common ſenſe, and leſs of a good meaning in them, that they do not deſerve a more particular Confutation; and as they ſerve as well for the not Puniſhing *Perjury*, *Bribery*, &c. ſo they would be with much more Decency offered, and one would hope ſooner to hear of them urged under a Heathen Government, than in a Proteſtant Country, and eſpecially under the Reign of a Prince that hath declared, that he deſires his Government ſhould be ſupported *by the Virtues, and not by the Vices of his People*. If therefore ſuch Arguments as theſe ſhould be uſed in this Reign, eſpecially by Magiſtrates, what an Indignity would thereby be offered to the King, and to the Nation? His Majeſty hath not ſurely gone through ſo many Years Fatigues, and expoſed Himſelf to ſo many Perſonal Dangers by Land and Sea, and the Nation hath not loſt ſo much Blood, and ſpent ſo many Millions for the ſecuring of our Liberties, and the obtaining a Peace with our Neighbours, that bad Men may have the Liberty to Blaſpheme the God of Heaven, and by their crying Sins to provoke Him to deſtroy us; to fling Contempt upon Religion, and inſult over our Laws, and to ruine us as well as themſelves, under the falſe and ſcandalous Pretences that we ſhall be by their Impunity

* 1 *Jac. c.* 9. 21 *Jac. c.* 7. 1 *Car. c.* 4. 7 *Jac. c.* 10. 4 *Jac. c.* 5.

the better enabled to pay off the Debt that is upon the Nation; that His Majeſty's Revenue will be encreaſed by the Encreaſe of *Drunkenneſs*, *Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, &c. If we ſhould have any Magiſtrates who ſhould thus wildly argue, to hinder the Proſecution of ſuch Offenders; and if this Frenzy ſhould thereby prevail, what an infatuated Nation muſt we be thought to be?

But ſuppoſing that we are not in danger of *Magiſtrates*, eſpecially in *this Reign*, that ſhall thus abuſe their *Authority* to the vileſt Purpoſes, by making it a Covert for acting the baſeſt things, what ſhall we think, in the next place, of ſuch Magiſtrates, if we ſhould have any of them, who, when their Commiſſion tells them that they *are to keep the Laws, as well as cauſe them to be kept*, ſhould frequently and openly break them, by whoſe bad Examples Multitudes may be led into vicious Courſes, or confirmed in them, and by it and their Unfaithfulneſs in their Office, (which I take to be generally a Conſequence of the other) a Nation may be drawn into Ruine, inſtead of being reformed by them? May not ſuch Magiſtrates be juſtly charged with being a great Cauſe of the Debauchery of the Nation? And what a load of Guilt muſt thereby lie upon them? Unhappy Men, that when they have ſo many Sins of their own, they will by this means contract ſo terrible an Addition to them. Hiſtory may, I think, tell them of more than one Unfaithful Magiſtrate who have been flea'd, and whoſe Skins have ſerv'd to cover the Bench or Place where they ſate: But what is this Puniſhment to that which an Unfaithful Magiſtrate hath reaſon to fear in the next World, tho' he meets with none in this? Suppoſing then from His Majeſty's *Proclamation*, and the *Addreſs* of the late

Houſe

Houſe of Commons, that there may have been, within our Memory, ſome ſuch Magiſtrates as theſe, does it not behove ſuch Men ſpeedily to lay to heart the dreadful Sin of their having been Promoters of the Devil's Kingdom, and of publick Ruine? And I need not ſurely tell them, that 'tis not enough for them to be ſenſible of their Guilt and Danger, to be ſorry for the great Miſchief they have done their Country, without heartily endeavouring, as they have opportunity, to retrieve it by their future Diligence, and contrary Behaviour. The Nature of diſtributive Juſtice, which their Office acquaints them with, requires a Man to repair the Injuries he has done to any. This is ſo ſtated a Rule among Divines, in the various kinds of known and wilful Injuries we may do to the Souls and Bodies, Eſtates and Reputation of our Neighbours, and is ſo generally acknowledged, that I ſhall not labour to prove it. If then 'tis allow'd, that all ſorts of wilful Injuries that we do our Neighbours, without Repentance for them, expoſe us to the Juſtice of God; and that our Repentance is not in ordinary Caſes reckoned ſound and compleat unleſs we endeavour, when it is in our power, to repair the Injuries we have done: Can ſuch Men be imagined ſo blindly partial to themſelves, as not to think, when they have publickly diſhonoured God, have drawn, by their wicked Examples, Numbers of Men into Sin, or confirmed 'em in it, have made uſe of their Authority to patronize Vice, (and perhaps to diſcredit and oppoſe juſt Endeavours of Reformation) in Contempt of their Oaths and Truſts; and have thereby done ſo much Injury to a Kingdom, that they are not obliged, for the removing the load of Guilt that is upon them,

the obtaining Forgiveneſs from God, a well-grounded Peace in their own Minds, and Eſteem from Men, ſincerely to endeavour to repair the Injuries they have done to their Religion, their Neighbours, or their Country, by their future Care and Diligence? And till they do give the World ſome proof of this, they will not take it amiſs if we do not think, that their late Repreſentatives in Parliament have put them under too heavy a Charge; and if we ſay that this is ſo very great, that tho' we are ſure that the Chriſtian Religion is the beſt Religion in the World, yet it ſo much condemns ſuch Practices, that ſuch as are guilty of them are a Diſhonour to their Profeſſion, that we reckon that honeſt Heathens are not the worſt ſort of Men; or rather, that there are few, if any, worſe than corrupt and unfaithful Magiſtrates. And therefore, methinks, tho' ſuch Magiſtrates were deaf to all Counſel, were ſo given over to a Spirit of Slumber, that no Motives that have been offered them from Religion will make any ſuch Impreſſion upon them, as to awaken them to a ſenſe of their Sin and Danger, if they have yet any thing of the Modeſty of Men remaining, Shame might oblige them to a better Behaviour: that they ſhould not be able to look a Man in the Face that hath a Love to God and his Country; but more eſpecially, that they ſhould be in the greateſt Confuſion to hear in our Churches, if they ſhould come there, the King's *Proclamation* Four times in the Year, charging them with being the great Cauſe of the Encreaſe of Prophaneneſs and Vice in the Nation. It hath been generally thought an Indication of a good and generous Mind to deſire an honeſt Reputation among Men; and, on the contrary, a ſign of a baſe Soul wholly to deſpiſe

ſpiſe it; on which Conſideration *Solon* might well preſume, in the Laws he gave the *Athenians*, *That he that hath no Value for his Reputation, will have little or no Regard to the publick Intereſt:* For how can it be reaſonably imagined, that he ſhould have a tender ſenſe of the Honour or Intereſt of his Country, who hath no ſenſe of his own Honour and greateſt Intereſt, but that he will ſacrifice them upon Occaſion? Indeed he that hath neither regard to Conſcience, nor ſenſe of Shame, ſeems not only in great danger of not being reduced to Virtue by any common Methods, but to be loſt to almoſt all good Purpoſes, to be unfit for common Intercourſes with Men, *but much more unfit to be honoured and entruſted with the Care of the Execution and Maintenance of the Laws, wherein the Religion, † the *Honour and Proſperity of the Nation*, is ſo highly concerned: And therefore I ſubmit it to the Judgment of thoſe who are more eſpecially concerned to conſider of theſe important Matters, whether it is not highly to be wiſhed, that effectual Care may be taken for the preventing the fatal Conſequences of ſuch Mens obtaining, in any future Reign, Commiſſions of this kind, particularly by diſabling any to hold them after they are convicted a certain number of times of the Violations of the Laws which they are entruſted to execute. For if we enquire into the Reaſons of the Happineſs of moſt, if not all of thoſe Nations, who have arrived at the greateſt pitch of Glory and Pro-

* Periculoſum eſt inſanienti gladium, ac improbo viro Magiſtratum committere.

Τὸν δὲ σωτῆρα καὶ φύλακα τῶν νόμων ἀδιάφθορον εἶναι δεῖ εἰς δυνάμιν ἀνθρωπίνην. *Jamblici.*

† Inter omnia quæ Rempublicam ejuſque felicitatem conſervant, nihil utilius, nihil præſtantius quam viros ad Magiſtratus gerendos eligere, ſumma prudentia, ſapientia & virtute præditos; quique ad honores obtinendos non ambitione, non largitionibus, ſed lege virtute & modeſtia ſibi parent aditum. *Grimal. de Op Sen. p.* 109.

ſperity, we ſhall, I believe, have a general Conſent, That the Diligence and Faithfulneſs of Magiſtrates have been one of the greateſt Cauſes of it, unqueſtionably far more inſtrumental therein than * good Laws, which, we know, are but dead Letters without the Magiſtrates Execution of them. † And therefore *Plato* in his Common-Wealth appointed, that the Conſervators of the Laws, whoſe chief Care was to promote Virtue, ſhould be ſuch Men as were eminent for Virtue, and ‡ more apply'd himſelf to the Forming of Magiſtrates than Laws. And accordingly 'twas wiſely obſerved by *Cicero*, *That if Magiſtrates keep the Laws themſelves, they had little more to wiſh for.* || And by the Famous *Athenian* Law-giver, *That Magiſtrates ought to obey the Laws, as well as the People the Magiſtrates, that a Goverment may be laſting.* Indeed we cannot eaſily conceive how any Nation can be long happy without good Magiſtrates: So that 'tis with great reaſon that our Church directs us to pray, That *all that are put in Authority may truly and indifferently miniſter Juſtice, to the Puniſhment of Wickedneſs and Vice, and to the Maintenance of God's true Religion and Virtue*; and that we eſteem thoſe that thus diſcharge their

* Verè dici poteſt Magiſtratum legem eſſe loquentem, legem autem mutum eſſe Magiſtratum. Magiſtratibus igitur opus eſt, ſine quorum prudentia & diligentia civitas non poteſt ſtare. *Cic. de Leg. p.* 232.

† Πρῶτον μὲν τῶν ἱερέων τῶν τὰ ἀεισεῖα εἰληφότων, ἔπειτα τῶν νομοφυλάκων τοῖς ἀεὶ πρεσβεύουσιν δέκα. Plato de Legibus, *Lib.* 12. *p.* 959.

Νομοφύλαξι δὲ πολλὰ τε ἄλλα ἀνάγκη πράττειν καὶ πολλῶν ὀπιμελεῖσθαι· τούτων δ' οὐκ ἤκουσα, ὅπως ἂν παίδων τε καὶ ἀνδρῶν καὶ πάσης ἡλικίας ὀπιμελόμενοι ζῶσι. Ibid. *p.* 959.

‡ Cum leges omnes vel optimæ abſque probatiſſimis Magiſtratibus mortuæ ſint, Magiſtratus autem optimi vel abſque legibus ſcriptis ipſi ſunt divæ leges, merito *Plato* non in condendis Legibus, ſed formandis Magiſtratibus omni diligentia elaboravit.

|| Σόλων, πῶς ἀεισεῖ αἱ πόλεις οἰκοῦντες εὐσταθεῖς, εἶπεν ἐὰν μὲν οἱ νόμοι τοῖς ἄρχουσι πείθωνται, οἱ δὲ ἄρχοντες τοῖς νόμοις. Stob.

Duty

Duty as great Bleſſings to their Country, and may praiſe God for them; and, on the contrary, that we think that thoſe unhappy Men, who, under the Obligations of Oaths and Truſts, have neglected or oppoſed the Execution of the Laws for the Puniſhment of Wickedneſs and Vice, and Maintenance of Religion, do deſervedly lie under the dreadful Imputation of having been *a great Cauſe of the Prophaneneſs and Debauchery of the Nation*, and the fatal Enemies of it, * ſince we may look on that Nation, whether it be our own, or any other, to be in a very languiſhing Condition, and in manifeſt danger of Ruine, where the Magiſtrates and the Generality of Men of greater Ranks, who have, by their being placed in higher Stations, as Stars in higher Orbs, ſo many Advantages to conduct the lower Ranks of Men, by the ſhining Examples of virtuous Lives, to ſupport the Reputation and Intereſt of Virtue, do, by the Abuſe of their Authority, or by their vicious Behaviour, ſcatter a peſtilential Infection where-ever they come, baſely make uſe of the Advantages they have above others, to the Diſhonour of God, by whoſe Permiſſion they enjoy them; † inſtead of being Patrons of Religion, help to debauch thoſe about them, and ruine their Country.

* Nam licet videre, ſi velis replicare memoriam temporum, qualeſcunque ſummi Civitatis fuerint, talem Civitatem fuiſſe. Idque haud paulò eſt verius quam quod Platoni noſtro placet, qui Muſicorum cantibus ait mutatis, mutari Civitatum ſtatus, ego autem Nobilium vita, victuque mutato, mores mutari Civitatum puto, *Cic de Leg. p.* 336.

† Accidit Magiſtratuum negligentia, & vitiis Nobilium, cives paulatim à virtute deſciſcant, variiſque malis Rempublicam afficiunt, quibus inundatis Rempublicam fluctuare neceſſe eſt, *Grim. de Opt. Sen.* 2. 152.

Inferior Officers are likewiſe obliged by their Oaths, as well as by the Deſign of their Offices, to be diligent in bringing Offenders to Puniſhment; and therefore they are highly criminal if they are negligent therein.

The Conſtable's Oath tells him, *That he is to uſe his Endeavour that Night-Walkers be apprehended. To ſee that the Statutes made for Puniſhing Vagabonds, and ſuch idle Perſons, coming within his Bounds and Limits, be duly put in Execution. To have a watchful Eye to ſuch Perſons as ſhall maintain or keep any Common Houſe or Place where any unlawful Game is or ſhall be uſed; as alſo, to ſuch as ſhall frequent or uſe ſuch Places, or ſhall uſe or exerciſe any unlawful Games there or elſewhere, contrary to the Statutes. To preſent at the Aſſizes, Seſſions of the Peace, or Leet, all and every the Offences done contrary to the Statutes made to reſtrain the inordinate Haunting and Tipling in Inns, Ale-Houſes, and other Victualling-Houſes, and for Repreſſing of Drunkenneſs; and that he is well and duly, according to his Knowledge, Power, and Ability, to do and execute all other things belonging to a Conſtable's Office.*

Whoever therefore they are that undertake this Office, and wink at Offenders, or do not endeavour to bring them to Puniſhment, would do well to conſider, how they can be acquitted from Perjury; but how much clearer is their Fault, if they neglect or refuſe to ſerve thoſe Warrants which are brought to them againſt *Swearers*, *Drunkards*, *Lewd Perſons*, and *Prophaners of the Lord's-Day*; or to levy the ſeveral Forfeitures for theſe Offences? as too many Conſtables, Headboroughs, Overſeers and Church-Wardens have done, which the Commiſſion of a Juſtice of the Peace tells him he is to enquire after. Their Guilt is of the ſame nature with that of thoſe Juſtices, who diſcourage Informations, and refuſe to ſign Warrants againſt ſuch Offenders, whereby, beſides all other Aggravations of their Sin before-

Dalt. p. 18. c. 5.

before-mentioned, they hinder the Poor of that Relief which the Law gives them out of the Penalties upon thoſe Statutes, *which in ſome Caſes may happen to be the depriving them of their Lives, and ought to be a dreadful Conſideration to thoſe that have the Guilt of it upon them; the Poor having as good and undoubted a Right to theſe Forfeitures, veſted in them by Law, as any Man hath to his own Eſtate. I have ſaid ſo much of the Conſtable's Duty, that there is the leſs need of my adding much of the Church-Warden's, Sideſman's, and other Inferior Officers Obligations in this reſpect, which fall in with that of the Conſtable's.

* Panis Pauperum eſt vita eorum, & qui fraudat eos eſt vir ſanguinis.

The Church-Wardens and Sideſmens Oath does not run in the ſame terms in all Dioceſſes, tho' their Office is, I ſuppoſe, much the ſame in moſt, if not all. The Tenor of the Church-Wardens and Sideſmens Oath in the Dioceſs of *London*, is as follows:

> *You ſhall Swear truly and faithfully to execute the Office of a Church-Warden, within your Pariſh, and according to the beſt of your Skill and Knowledge preſent ſuch Things and Perſons as you know to be preſentable by the Laws Eccleſiaſtical of the Realm.*

And one of the Articles of Enquiry exhibited to the Miniſters, Church-Wardens, and Sideſmen of every Pariſh, runs thus: *Are any of your Pariſh known or ſuſpected to be guilty of* Inceſt, Adultery, Fornication, *or any other Enormous Crimes? Do any Prophane the* Lord's-Day, *or any other great Holy-day, or the Name of* GOD? And if the Church-Wardens and Sideſmen neglect to Preſent, the Miniſters are told, *That they may, and ought*

ought to Preſent, as they have the higheſt Obligations to ſuppreſs Iniquity.

From hence 'tis plain, That the Power of Inferior Officers, as well as that of Magiſtrates, is great, and would have a very remarkable Effect for the Suppreſſing of publick Diſorders, if it was generally uſed, and might (with God's Bleſſing) go very far towards a National Reformation, with the Aſſiſtance of the Magiſtrate, if private Perſons would but do as, I conceive, becomes them, in giving Informations againſt *Swearers*, *Drunkards*, *Lewd Perſons*, and *Prophaners of the Lord's-Day*, to the Magiſtrate, which ſhall be my next Buſineſs to recommend to the Conſideration of all that have a Love to God, their Neighbour, or their Country.

It hath been proved, That the Execution of good Laws is requiſite, in our preſent Circumſtances, for the Suppreſſing of Vice, and the Effecting a Reformation of Manners; but Magiſtrates cannot put the Laws in Execution againſt Offenders without they have the Knowledge of the Offences; and they cannot be preſent at all Places to obſerve them, tho' they have either ſuch a Senſe of their Duty, or ſo pious a Concern to do all the good they can in their Office, as frequently to take their Walks, to obſerve Diſorders, (as divers of the worthy Magiſtrates have here done) in the ſeveral Quarters of the County in which they live, and to embrace all Opportunities of uſing their Authority for the Suppreſſing them: And thoſe Offences, that are *Deeds of Darkneſs*, it may be hoped, for the Honour of our Magiſtrates, are not now generally and knowingly committed before them. One would think that the Preſence of a Magiſtrate ſhould

ſhould have ſuch an Awe upon ill Men, that they ſhould not dare to tranſgreſs before him: That he ſhould reſent it as a high Affront to him, if a Perſon of the higheſt Rank ſhould diſcover ſo baſe an Opinion of him, as to expect that he ſhould be content to break his Oath, to ſuffer him, upon the account of his Quality, to go unpuniſhed for any Offence of this kind committed before him. It is certainly much ſo where Magiſtrates have a juſt ſenſe of Honour, or are as Zealous and Faithful in the Diſcharge of their Office as they ought to be: But the leſs this may reaſonably be hoped from all Magiſtrates at this day: there appears, I am ſure, the more reaſon, or rather a neceſſity, for private Perſons applying themſelves to this Buſineſs of giving Informations to them of our reigning Sins, without which, it is not reaſonably to be expected that Offenders will be generally brought to Puniſhment, eſpecially in Cities and Corporations, where it may be preſumed, without Uncharitableneſs, that many are daily either publickly or privately breaking the Laws againſt Prophaneneſs and Immorality.

Magiſtratus indicat virum.

Thus then our giving of Informations of theſe Offences to the Magiſtrate ſeems abſolutely neceſſary in our preſent Circumſtances, as we heartily deſire or expect the Suppreſſion of Prophaneneſs and Vice by Humane Laws. And I deſire thoſe who would be informed whether there is any Direction or Example for this Practice from the Word of God, to conſider the following Texts of Scripture: *If there be found among you within any of thy Gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee, Man or Woman that hath wrought Wickedneſs in the ſight of the Lord thy God, in tranſgreſſing his Covenant, And he hath gone and ſerved other Gods,* Deut. 17. 2. Ver. 3. *and*

Ver. 4. *and worſhipped them, And it be told thee, and thou haſt heard of it, and enquired diligently, and behold it be true, and the thing certain, that ſuch Abomination*
Ver. 5. *is wrought in Iſrael: Then ſhalt thou bring forth that Man, or that Woman, (which hath committed that Wicked thing) unto thy Gates, even that Man or that Woman, and ſhalt ſtone them with Stones till they*
Lev. 24. 11. *die. And the Iſraelitiſh Woman's Son Blaſphemed the Name of the Lord, and Curſed, and they brought*
Ver. 13. *him unto Moſes. And the Lord ſpake unto Moſes,*
Ver. 14. *ſaying, Bring forth him that hath Curſed without the Camp, and let all that heard him lay their Hands upon his Head, and let all the Congregation ſtone him.*
Ezra 9. 1. *Now when theſe things were done, the Princes came to me, ſaying, The People of Iſrael, and the Prieſts and the Levites, have not ſeparated themſelves from the People of the Lands, doing according to their Abo-*
Mat. 18. 17. *minations,* &c. *And if he neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church.* Nay, they would do well to conſider, in how many Inſtances, under the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation, thoſe who ſaw, or were acquainted with ſuch Offences, were poſitively commanded to be Witneſſes or Informers againſt the Perſons who committed them, tho' they were their near-
Deut. 13. 6. eſt Relations: Thus, *If thy Brother, the Son of thy Mother, or thy Son, or thy Daughter, or the Wife of thy Boſom, or thy Friend which is as thine own Soul, entice thee ſecretly, ſaying, Let us go and ſerve*
Ver. 8. *other Gods. Thou ſhalt not conſent unto him, nor hearken unto him, neither ſhall thine Eye pity him, neither ſhalt thou ſpare, neither ſhalt thou conceal him,*
Ver. 9. *But thou ſhalt ſurely kill him; thine Hand ſhall be firſt upon him to put him to Death, and afterwards*
Ver. 11. *the Hand of all the People. And all Iſrael ſhall hear, and fear, and ſhall do no more any ſuch Wickedneſs as this is among you.* Now tho' this Method of giving

giving Informations to the Magiſtrate againſt prophane and vicious Perſons may appear to unthinking People to carry Severity in it, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew that it may be lookt on as a comprehenſive Branch of Charity, and a Religious Office, when it is performed, as other good Acts ſhould be, with pure Intentions, upon proper Occaſions, and in a Chriſtian Temper.

It is, in the firſt place, a great Kindneſs to the Poor; the Money that is raiſed by Convictions upon theſe Statutes againſt Prophaneneſs and Vice being by Law given to them, whereby they have in Fact had, for ſeveral Years paſt, in *London* and *Weſtminſter*, a conſiderable Supply, in the times of their great Diſtreſs; and the Burthen of the Proviſion for them, that hath lain ſo heavy on Pariſhes, hath been eaſed: So that this Office, if there was no other Reaſon for it, one would think ſhould be agreeable to Men of Charity, to thoſe eſpecially whoſe Circumſtances will not permit them to give ſuch Aſſiſtance to the Poor as they could otherwiſe wiſh; the Good of our poor Neighbour being hereby promoted by the ſame Act that prevents God's Diſhonour. But the giving of Informations againſt Offenders will, I conceive, be found, upon an impartial Enquiry, to be a real Act of Charity, even towards the Perſons offending, and to the Publick, as well as to thoſe who are relieved by the Penalties levied upon them.

'Tis univerſally acknowledged, that we are not only to apply our ſelves to the working out our own Salvation, but that we are to be concern'd for the Salvation of one anothers Souls, and to endeavour to further it, according to our Advantages and Opportunities; and that this

Care

Care is an Expreſſion of great Charity to our Neighbour, and highly acceptable to Almighty
Jam. 5.20. God. For we are told, That *he which converteth a Sinner from the Error of his way, ſhall ſave a Soul from Death, and ſhall hide a multitude of Sins*; and
Dan. 12. 3. that *they that turn many to Righteouſneſs ſhall ſhine*
*Jam. 5.16. *as the Stars for ever and ever.* * *Prayer, Exhorta-*
1 Tim. 2. 1. *tion, Admonition, Reproof,* and *good Example,* are
Heb. 3. 13. all proper means for this end, and are plainly
Rom. 15. 14. inculcated in the Word of God; but when there
2 Theſſ. 3 15. is but little or no hope of our Neighbour's Amendment by the uſe of ſuch means, (as I con-
Eph. 5. 11. ceive there often is) where the Offender is ſo
Mat. 5. 16. impudent and hardned, that he deſpiſes Counſel and Reproof, or they make no ſort of good Impreſſion upon him, but he rather takes an Occaſion to commit the more Sin, by falling into Paſſion, or other Unchriſtian Irregularities, and he bids defiance to all other means, as he too often does, when he is ſo far from being aſhamed of his Wickedneſs, that he values himſelf upon
Prov. 14. 9. it, and makes a *Mock at Sin*, as *Solomon* tells us *Fools do*, that he calls upon his Maker to damn him, or he otherwiſe glories in his Shame: And
Matt. 7. 6. our Saviour's Direction takes place, of *not caſting of Pearls before Swine:* And we have, laſtly, little or no reaſon to expect any help or redreſs in this Caſe from the Eccleſiaſtical Power, by *telling*
Mat. 18. 17. *his Offences to the Church:* Is it not an Act of Charity to try what the bringing the Offender to a legal Correction will do towards the recovering the poor Captive out of the Snare of the Devil, and bringing him to a right mind? And does not the neglect of doing this, the ſuffering him to go on in his wicked Courſes, to the manifeſt danger of the ruine of his Temporal and Eternal Intereſt,

Intereſt, rather than the bringing him to wholſome Puniſhment, ſeem rather an Argument of fooliſh Pity, than of Love; of a cruel and treacherous Fondneſs, than real Kindneſs? We do not think it an expreſſion of Kindneſs to our deareſt Relations, that are lying under dangerous Diſtempers, to chuſe rather to ſee them quietly die, than to uſe Medicines that will give them more Pain and Diſturbance, but are proper for the Recovering them. And it is not the leſs Kindneſs to them becauſe in their deſperate and delirous Fits they have not a ſence of the Good we intend them by it, but refuſe the Remedy, and perhaps fly in the Face of the Phyſician; nay, when Inciſions are neceſſary, when a Member is to be cut off to prevent a Gangreen, we tie them down, and their Cries and Reproaches of Hardſhip and ill Uſage, tho' they are in their Senſes, do not hinder the Operation. And have we not ſo much Compaſſion for thoſe miſerable Creatures who have little or no true Compaſſion for themſelves, that lie under the Lethargy of Sin, whereby their Souls are in ſo great and evident danger of being for ever loſt, to endeavour, by the Magiſtrates Puniſhment of them, to ſcarifie and awaken them out of their deadly Sleep, to a ſenſe of their dangerous Condition? and the Conſideration of it, which may have its beginning in the Fear of the Law, that they are driven to by the Shame and Puniſhment that is thereby brought upon them, may be a means (with God's Grace) of working the happieſt Effects, may end in their heartily embracing wholſome Counſels. And will not they then think, that they that brought them to legal Correction did them a Kindneſs, how grievous ſoever it was to them when it was upon them;

them; and that it was happy for them that they met with that Puniſhment that led them to Wiſdom? and when this Method for the good of our Neighbour's Soul fails, we may, as after the uſe of other proper means for the Cure of his Body, tho' without Effect, reaſonably give our ſelves ſome Satisfaction upon this Conſideration alone: But, in the next place, this Practice is however a high Service to the Community; for Religion being every Man's great Intereſt, every one's Work or Duty, * the Community, according to the Senſe of the Civil Law, is injured by the Contempt that is flung upon it, by the open Affronts and Violations of it, which every Man, as in a common cauſe, is therefore concerned to prevent. Now the Exemplary Puniſhment of open Offenders is the proper way (as Reaſon and Experience may convince us) to repreſs publick Vice and Prophaneneſs, to keep the Generality from it, and to prevent God's Diſhonour. It is, I conceive, one way moreover to keep us from being *Partakers in other Mens Sins*, and to take away National Guilt; for a Nation may then be ſuppoſed to contract publick Guilt, when Wickedneſs is publick and inſolent, when the Supream or Subordinate Magiſtrates and Miniſters do, by their own ill Examples, and by their not Exerciſing their Power or Authority, countenance and confirm Men in it, and the Body of the People have no concern for the Suppreſſing of it: But a Nation is not thought to draw upon it that publick Guilt which calls for National Puniſhment by the private Sins of particular Perſons, which could not be prevented by either the Magiſtrates, Miniſters, or the Peoples Care and Endeavours; much of which ſeems to be intimated

* Religio contaminata ad omnium pertinet Injuriam.

timated to us, as from other Texts of Scripture, ſo particularly from theſe following: *The Hands of the Witneſſes ſhall be firſt upon him to put him to Death, and afterward the Hands of all the People. So thou ſhalt put the Evil away from among you. And all the People ſhall hear, and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly. Then ſhall his Father and his Mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the Elders of his City, and unto the Gate of his Place. And they ſhall ſay unto the Elders of his City, This our Son is ſtubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our Voice; he is a Glutton and a Drunkard. And all the Men of his City ſhall ſtone him with Stones that he die: So ſhalt thou put Evil away from among you, and all Iſrael ſhall hear and fear.* Where we may obſerve, that for the Suppreſſing of Sin, and the Preventing of publick Guilt, even Parents were commanded to bring their own Children to be puniſhed with Death, if after they were corrected by them for Gluttony and Drunkenneſs, *&c.* they were not amended by it. Deut. 17. 7. Ver. 13. Deut. 21. 19. Ver. 20. Ver. 21.

If then the Puniſhment of Offenders, by the Execution of the Laws againſt Debauchery and Prophaneneſs, is neceſſary to the Suppreſſing of Vice, and thoſe Laws will not be generally Executed, unleſs Perſons acquaint Magiſtrates with the Breaches of them; if thoſe that do ſo exerciſe Charity to the Souls of the Offenders, take a proper courſe thereby to avoid a Participation in their Guilt, to make a Proviſion for the Wants of the Poor, to promote a General Reformation of Manners, to remove National Guilt, and prevent God's Judgments falling upon the Body of a People, can any wiſe and good Men, that duly conſider theſe things, conclude, that they that zealouſly, and upon proper Occaſions, give In-

formations to the Magiſtrates of the crying Enormities of this Kingdom, do that which is not agreeable to their Profeſſion, as becomes Chriſtians, or as good Members of the Community? nay, that conſidering our preſent Circumſtances, that there is ſo little probability that a general Reformation of Manners will be carried on without it, whether they are not almoſt, if not altogether as neceſſary for this purpoſe as our Statute-Book, I was like to have ſaid, as even our Magiſtracy? And then, laſtly, can any wiſe and unprejudiced Men think, that ſuch ſerviceable Perſons as theſe, that often expoſe themſelves to Inconveniencies in diſcharging this Office for Conſcience-ſake, (which may be perhaps the moſt difficult and invidious, and therefore a highly honourable part in this arduous Work of Reformation) do not deſerve great reſpect, and good Words at leaſt from thoſe, who, tho' they have juſt thoughts of the Reaſonableneſs and Neceſſity of it, have not Zeal enough themſelves to diſcharge it? * and the good Words that are given them, and the Reſpect that is paid them upon this account may, in many caſes, be a means of furthering this Work, which are ſuch cheap and ſafe things, that, 'tis to be hoped, they will not be thought too much to be afforded by the moſt faint-hearted Chriſtian that is willing to contribute any Endeavours towards it; which, it may be expected, thoſe that deſerve the Name of Chriſtians will be. For tho' thoſe brave Men are thus willing to expoſe themſelves, often to Reproach and Hardſhips from bad Men, for ſuch noble purpoſes, it will, I think, notwithſtanding, conſidering the Infirmities of Humane Nature, and the Wickedneſs of this Nation, be our Prudence and

* Primum inter beneficia eſt ut boni laude afficiantur. Laus enim parit emulationem, emulatio virtutem. *Stob. p.* 50.

and Religion to endeavour, by all proper Methods, to prevent their being put too much upon the tryal of Sufferings from profligate Men, which, 'tis ſelf-evident, our particular countenance of them, and ſpeaking well of their Actions upon all due Occaſions will effectually do. Our Laws ſuppoſe ſuch Men thus highly uſeful, as clear reaſon tells us they are, for the Promotion of Virtue, and indeed for the Preſervation of any Government. Her late Majeſty of Glorious Memory, in purſuance of Her great deſign of *Reforming the Nation*, did therefore, in Her Gracious *Letter* to the Juſtices of *Middleſex*, *Command them to be careful and diligent in Encouraging all Perſons that ſhould bring them Informations of theſe Offences*; and the Juſtices of *Middleſex*, the Magiſtrates of *London*, and of divers other Cities of the Kingdom, from a ſenſe of the great Service that is done the Publick by ſuch Perſons giving Informations, or rather, as may be ſuppoſed, from the abſolute Neceſſity of it, do in their *Printed Orders* invite thoſe that are Well-wiſhers to their Country, *to bring them Informations of the Breaches of the Laws againſt Prophaneneſs and Vice*; *and tell them 'tis their Duty to do it, and promiſe to give them Encouragement.* And now, laſtly, His Majeſty by His *Proclamation* does command all *Judges, Mayors, Sheriffs, Juſtices of the Peace, and all other Officers and Miniſters, both Eccleſiaſtical and Civil, and all His Subjects, whom it may concern, to be very* **Vigilant** *and* **Strict** *in the* **Diſcovery**, *and the* **Effectual Proſecution** *and* Puniſhment *of all Perſons who ſhall be guilty of Exceſſive Drinking, Blaſphemy, Prophane Swearing and Curſing, Lewdneſs, Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, &c. *as they will anſwer it to Almighty God, and upon pain of his* July 9. 1691.

highest Displeasure. So that those who oppose the giving of Informations in these Cases, not only seem directly to strike at the Foundation of our Constitution, but do oppose Reformation, and confront the Government, which are Enormities that demand a due Resentment from all that are concerned for the Honour of our Government, our Laws, or our Religion. And if any Magistrates should discourage those that bring them Informations on these occasions, by giving them hard words, making their Work as difficult to them as they can, by wilfully forcing them to long and unnecessary Attendance on them in this Business, or not sheltring them from the Insults of obstinate Offenders, if any should be so insolent and daring as to offer them, 'tis, I think, evident, that they not only act therein contrary to their Duty, as Christians, but to their Oaths and Trusts, as Magistrates, and to their pretensions of Loyalty and Obedience to the Government, as Subjects. And now, is it possible to conceive, that any Magistrates can desire the Execution of those Laws; nay, that any that are not the greatest Enemies to it, and are not lost to all sense of true Honour as well as Conscience, should in defiance of all their Obligations, and in full Contradiction to their printed Orders with their Names to them, publickly set up by their Direction on Churches and other publick Places, not treat with respect, and give the greatest Encouragement to those excellent Persons, particularly by making this business as easie to them as they can, by protecting them from any kind of Affronts and Assaults from wicked Men, and giving them all possible dispatch, who, in such a profligate Age, do, for the preventing the Indignities

that

that are offered to the great God, and the Ruine of their Country, bring them, generally with trouble, and ſometimes with great difficulty, Informations of ſuch Offences?

And, on the other hand, I do not ſee, generally ſpeaking, how thoſe that are convinced, that the giving of Informations to Magiſtrates of theſe Offences is a Chriſtian Office, a likely and proper, if not a neceſſary means of *Reformation of Manners*, and yet wholly neglect the doing it, at a time when they ſee their Fellow-Chriſtians engaging ſucceſsfully in it, can in ordinary caſes eaſily ſatisfie themſelves that they have a due Zeal for God's Honour, or Charity to their Neighbours. 'Tis allowed, that this will be ſometimes done with ſome Danger and Inconvenience, * but ſo much the more laudable is the doing of it. A brave Man who refuſes to live under the ſlaviſh Dominion of Cuſtom and Example, who frequently works againſt Wind and Tide, and ſteers in the Teeth of Danger, muſt expect to be ſometimes toſt and batter'd; † but Dangers and Difficulties do often invite, rather than diſcourage ſuch a one from doing that which becomes him. Virtue could, I think, be hardly diſtinguiſhed from a kind of Senſuality, if it were gained without any Labour. Every mean Soul can do ſuch things as require no Reſolution or Courage, that are not attended with any Trouble or Inconvenience; but tho there has never been ſo general a Corruption in any Chriſtian Age or Nation, as that there have not been ſome conſpicuous for their Piety, yet the number of thoſe wiſe and happy Perſons have, in moſt Ages of the World, been too few, who have preferr'd their Duty to all other Conſiderations. If 'tis not generally thought faſhionable to Inform, let it be conſider'd,

* Dulce eſt periculum ſequi Deum.

† Avida eſt periculi virtus, & quo tendat non quod paſſura eſt, cogitat; quoniam & quod paſſura eſt, gloriæ pars eſt. *Sen. de Pr. cap.* 4. *p.* 137.

whether 'tis fashionable to be Religious. Don't Men usually meet with the reproachful Names of Hypocrites, Fools, Enthusiasts, Phanaticks, or formal and precise Persons, who lead Christian, or but modest and regular Lives? But those Men that understand what Religion is, do not surely think this gives them a sufficient Dispensation to be Libertines. They know that *Elisha* and St. *Paul* were called Mad-men; that Holy *David* was derided by the People; that *Christ*, his *Apostles*, and the *Christians* in the first Ages, were treated accordingly. Wise Men and Christians are not so much afraid of ill Names, as of wicked Actions: † And our Judgment of Actions must not be taken from the Opinions of Men, but from the Nature of them, otherwise the Notions of Good and Evil will be soon confounded. Those Actions are dishonourable that carry in their Nature a Repugnancy to Reason and Religion; but if those Actions that directly tend to preserve and strengthen Government, to promote Religion, and the good of Mankind, be honourable, then the giving of Informations upon these Occasions, that are so much countenanced and encouraged by the Government and the Laws, are, I conceive, truly honourable, tho' corrupt Men judge otherwise; * such, for instance, who think it more honourable to resent an Affront with the loss of their own or their Fellow-Christians Lives, and reckon, in short, Temperance and Chastity, Meekness and Humility, Zeal for God, and Heavenly-mindedness, contemptible Qualities, and fit for mean and base Souls. Let it be remembred, that Christians are ‖ *to walk by Faith, and not by Sight*; † by Precepts, and not by Examples; that 'tis to the most high God, *who judgeth Righteously*, and with whom the

† Tuo tibi judicio utendum est virtutis & vitiorum, grave ipsius conscientiæ pondus est, quâ sublatâ jacent omnia. *Cic.*

* Apud quos virtus insania & furor esse dicitur.

‖ 2 Cor. 5. 7.

† Non Exemplis, sed Legibus judicandum.

the *Wiſdom of this World is Fooliſhneſs*, and not to a ſinful Generation that, in divers Inſtances that might be mentioned, calls *Evil*, *Good*; and *Good*, *Evil*, that we are to approve our ſelves. So that putting this Caſe at that diſadvantage as the cowardly and formal Chriſtian (who will not fail to raiſe Objections, and ſtart Difficulties on ſuch an Occaſion) would have it, and will be ſure himſelf to do; ſuppoſing that the giving of Informations of theſe Offences ſhould ſometimes expoſe Men to reproachful Words or rude Treatment from an ill Magiſtrate, or a profligate Offender, which it will not be for the Honour of any Government to countenance, 'tis the Buſineſs, I think, of Chriſtians to conſider, whether they ought not to ſuffer Shame, and undergo ſome Trouble and Loſs for the Exerciſing an Act of Charity to their Neighbours Souls, for the ſuppreſſing of National Sins, the preventing of God's Diſhonour, and the ruine of their Country, now eſpecially that their Endeavours of this kind will be ſo very likely to be effectual for theſe ends. If the Work is unqueſtionably good, we are told in the Holy Scriptures, That *'tis good to be zealouſly affected always in a good thing*. That *Chriſt gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie unto himſelf a peculiar People zealous of good Works*. And we are further told by our Bleſſed Saviour, That becauſe his Diſciples *were not of the World, but he had choſen them out of the World, therefore the World hated them, as it hated him*. And by the Apoſtle, That all that *will live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer Perſecution*, which, I think, Chriſtians in this Age experience in ſome degree, as well as they did in the times of Perſecution. For do we not ſee the faithful Servants of God frequently

1 Cor. 3. 19.

Gal. 4. 18.

Tit. 2. 14.

Joh. 15. 18, 19.

2 Tim. 3. 12.

quently ſuffering Injuries from wicked Men? we ſee them calumniated, derided and contemned by them, and expoſed to many Aſſaults and Sufferings from them for the ſake of their Religion. Their holy Lives they are ſenſible do reproach them, which is very grievous to them; and for this Cauſe they often, I ſuppoſe, bear a Hatred to them, which puts them upon ſeeking Opportunities, which they ſoon enough find, to injure them, either in their Goods, in their Bodies, or in their Reputation; of which there is given us, in the Book of *Wiſdom*, a very lively Deſcription: *Let*

Wiſd. 2. 12. *us lie in wait for the Righteous, becauſe he is not for our turn, and he is clean contrary to our doings: he*

Ver. 14. *upbraideth us with our offending the Law. He was*

Ver. 15. *made to reprove our Thoughts. He is grievous unto us even to behold; for his Life is not like other Mens,*

Ver. 16. *his Ways are of another faſhion. We are eſteemed of him as Counterfeits: he abſtaineth from our Ways as from Filthineſs: he pronounceth the End of the Juſt to be bleſſed, and maketh his boaſt that God is his Fa-*

Ver. 17. *ther. Let us ſee if his Words be true, and let us prove*

Ver. 19. *what ſhall happen in the End of him. Let us examine him with Deſpiteſulneſs and Torture, that we may*

Ver. 20. *know his Meekneſs, and prove his Patience. Let us condemn him with a ſhameful Death: for by his own ſaying he ſhall be reſpected.* But in the *fifth Chapter* there is a Repreſentation of the different State of the Righteous and the Ungodly, among whom thoſe that are either for or againſt *Reformation* will find themſelves one day ranked, either to their unſpeakable Comfort or Miſery, that may be ſo much more encouraging to good Men, than the other Account may to any appear uncomfortable, that I ſhall give the Reader at the ſame time ſome

Wiſd. 5. 1. View likewiſe of it. *Then ſhall the Righteous Man ſtand*

ſtand in great boldneſs before the Face of ſuch as have afflicted him, and made no account of his Labours.
When they ſee it they ſhall be troubled with terrible fear, Ver. 2.
and ſhall be amazed at the ſtrangeneſs of his Salvation, ſo far beyond all that they looked for. And they repenting, and groaning for anguiſh of Spirit, ſhall ſay within themſelves, This was he whom we had ſometimes in Deriſion, and a Proverb of Reproach. We Fools accounted his Life Madneſs, and his End to be without Honour. How is he numbred among the Children of God, and his Lot is among the Saints? We wearied our ſelves in the way of Wickedneſs and Deſtruction: yea, we have gone through Deſerts, where there lay no way: but as for the Way of the Lord we have not known it. What hath Pride profited us? Or what good hath Riches with our Vaunting brought us? All thoſe things are paſſed away like a Shadow, and as a Poſt that haſted by. For the Hope of the Ungodly is like Duſt that is blown away with the Wind: But the Righteous live for evermore, their Reward alſo is with the Lord, and the Care of them is with the moſt High. Therefore ſhall they receive a Glorious Kingdom, &c.

Ver. 3. Ver. 4. Ver. 5. Ver. 7. Ver. 8. Ver. 9. Ver. 14. Ver. 15.

If then wicked Men have ſuch an Enmity to the Righteous, and do by various ways often injure and oppreſs them, it is no wonder that the giving of Informations ſhould, as well as other Chriſtian Offices or Duties ſometimes do, make Men liable to Oppoſition and Sufferings from bad Men, who deſire to indulge themſelves quietly in their Vices, becauſe this is a downright diſturbing and confronting them in their vicious Practices: But 'tis, as hath been ſaid, our Buſineſs to conſider, that the Chriſtian Life is a Warfare, that Chriſtians are ſent into the World, as Soldiers into the Field, to fight againſt it, the Fleſh, and the Devil; and that

that as a Captain is tryed in a Battle, an expert Seaman in a Storm, ſo is a Chriſtian by the Temptations of all kinds that he meets with in his Warfare, by which he is diſciplined or catechized for a happy Eternity; and that therefore he muſt march on through all Difficulties and Diſcouragements, * particularly through Honour and Diſhonour, through good and bad Report, to Immortality; and therefore, whether the danger of our being expoſed to Reproach and Contempt from wicked Men is a ſufficient Reaſon for our having no regard to this Chriſtian Office I am recommending? The Heathen Emperour, ‖ *Marcus Antoninus*, could tell us, *That in the purſuit of Virtue we muſt expect Reproaches and Contumelies, but that we are not to be deterred from it by the common Opinions of Men*, which, ſays he, *Socrates* reckoned as the common Bugbears of the World, or the Terrour of Children. And *Seneca* in like manner, That Men will ſometimes (which he judged the laſt Act of Deſperation) reproach, hate, and perſecute even Virtue it ſelf; † *and that he ſeemed to have the greateſt Value for, or devotedneſs to Virtue, that loſeth the Reputation of being Virtuous, to avoid the being otherwiſe.* In truth I think 'tis much to be feared, but being very unwilling to fall under the too common Errour of not duly conſidering Humane Frailties and Prejudices, or to advance poſitively any Opinion that may juſtly bear a diſpute with any but thoſe that bring the Reaſon of Mankind and Religion its ſelf into diſpute, (as I hope will appear throughout theſe Sheets) *I ſubmit it to the Judgment of the Caſuiſts, that tho' the former general Negligence of good Men in

* Per infamiam & bonam famam graſſari ad Immortalitatem.

‖ *Mar. Aur. Ante. l.* 11.

† Nemo mihi videtur pluris æſtimare virtutem, nemo illi magis eſſe devotus, quàm qui boni viri famam perdidit, nè conſcientiam perderet. *Sen. Epiſt.* 81.

* *See the Arch-Biſhop of* Canterbury's *late Circular Letter, with the Concurring Letters of all the Biſhops of that Province, for the Obligation of Perſons to give Informations of the Breaches of the Laws againſt Prophaneneſs and Vice*, p. 6.

this

this Matter may, and indeed, I think, muſt in Charity be ſuppoſed to have been very much owing to a Diſcouragement from Magiſtrates, to private Perſons Ignorance of the Methods of performing this Office, or ſingle Perſons deſpairing of doing thereby much Service for the Ends beforementioned, under the diſmal State this Nation in the two laſt Reigns was in; If this Negligence is continu'd after this Matter is plainly laid before us, the giving of Informations is now more generally inſiſted on by our Clergy in their Sermons, eſpecially at thoſe ſtated times that they are required to read the *Act of Parliament* againſt *Swearing* and *Curſing*, with the other *Statutes* againſt *Prophaneneſs* and *Vice*, by His Majeſty's *Letter*, and His late Gracious *Proclamation* for the enforcing the Execution of them; and we have moreover ſuch a change of Circumſtances, and ſuch favourable Occurrences, as that our Diligence in giving Informations will at this time ſo effectually promote a *National Reformation*, (as it is evident it will do from what is already done by it) that it will be found, notwithſtanding the Objections and plauſible pretences that will be made on this Occaſion by many for their being excuſed from it, to proceed frequently, if not generally, from worſe Cauſes, that we are either afraid or aſhamed of diſcharging it, from a want of Faith, or of Love to God and our Neighbour, not duly conſidering the Admonition, *Fear ye not the Reproach of Men, neither be ye afraid of their Revilings.* That the *Fearful* and *Unbelieving* are joined together with thoſe who *ſhall have their part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone*; nor the Extent of our Saviour's Threatning, *Whoſoever therefore ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my Words, in this adulterous and*

Iſa. 51. 7.

Rev. 21. 8.

Mar. 8. 38.

and ſinful Generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with the Holy Angels; nor, laſtly, the great Encouragement given in the Word of God to thoſe
Matt.5.10. that ſuffer for diſcharging of their Duty; *Bleſſed are they which are Perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake;*
2Cor.4.17. *for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Our light Affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more Exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory.*
1Pet.4.16. *If any Man ſuffer as a Chriſtian, let him not be aſhamed; but let him glorifie God on this behalf. Where-*
1Pet.4.19. *fore let them that ſuffer according to the Will of God commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creatour.*

And now, if notwithſtanding what hath been ſaid, or that may be urged by our Clergy with more Advantage in their Diſcourſes, for our giving Informations againſt prophane and vicious Men, and the Magiſtrates Diligence and Faithfulneſs that was before inſiſted on, this criminal Fear and Shame ſhall ſo generally prevail, as to keep private Perſons from giving Informations in theſe Caſes, and ſhall likewiſe keep Magiſtrates (who have leſs colour of Excuſe for their Unfaithfulneſs, they being under the Obligations of Oaths and Truſts, ſuper-added to thoſe they have as Chriſtians) from uſing their Diligence in the Execution of the Laws, and particularly from giving all Countenance and juſt Encouragement to thoſe who bring them Informations, at the ſame time that Prophaneneſs and Debauchery do appear ſo ſhameleſs and fearleſs among us, what a weight of Guilt may be ſuppoſed to lie upon this Nation? And in how great danger of Miſery and Deſtruction may it be apprehended to be, which I do not ſee with what reaſon we can ex-

pect

pect will ſo likely be prevented by any other means, as by the cloſe Conjunction, the zealous and united Endeavours of good Men, for the Retrieving of Religion, and the Morals of the Nation, by all Chriſtian and Prudent Methods. For Religion in general, and the Practice of every Moral Virtue in particular, do in their own Nature tend not only to the Felicity of every Man's private Life, but do alſo conduce to the Peace, Order and Welfare of all publick Societies, and good Government over Men, as it hath the greateſt Influence for theſe Ends upon *Magiſtrates* and *Subjects*.

Religion teaches and obliges Governours to over-rule their Subjects in the Fear of God, to his Glory, and for the Safety and Proſperity of thoſe that are in Subjection to them; and therefore, I think, to endeavour to ſupport and encourage them in the Exerciſe of Religion and Virtue, and this as well by the Uſe of their Authority, (which may, for inſtance, be expreſſed by their Perſonally Countenancing and Promoting Men of Virtue, and Diſcountenancing vicious Men, by their taking Care that good Laws be made for the Security of Religion; and that the Laws that are made for the Promotion of Chriſtian Virtues, and the Suppreſſion of Vice, be put in Execution) as by their own Exemplary Behaviour, * which hath a wonderful force, is as it were a living Law, and Religion inſtills in Subjects ſuch Principles and Diſpoſitions as in their own nature tend to make a Government ſtrong and proſperous, as well as themſelves happy: It inſtructs and obliges them to obey Magiſtrates, not only for Fear, but out of Conſcience. † And as Piety and Virtue do thus evidently conduce to the Stability and Happineſs of any Kingdom and Government;

* Non ſic inflectere ſenſus humanos edicta valent, ut vita regentis. Qui Maceadoniæ regem erudit omnes etiam ſubditos erudit. Delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.

† Facile eſt imperium in bonos.

ſo

ſo Vice and Irreligion, in the natural conſequences of them, tend to bring Decay and Ruine upon them, as they unqualifie Magiſtrates for Government, and * make Subjects unfit for Commands, averſe to all good Order, and deſtructive inſtead of helpful Members of a Community; from whence † *Plutarch* might juſtly eſteem it the Foundation or Cement of Humane Society, and with *Plato* conclude, That in the Inſtitution of Magiſtracy the firſt and chief Care ſhould be of Religion; and the Famous *Scipio* obſerve, That it was impoſſible any City ſhould ſtand if their Manners were thoroughly depraved, tho' their Walls were never ſo firm. || Accordingly, I conceive, there have been but few, if any, amongſt the ancient and celebrated Legiſlators and Stateſmen, whatever there have been among our Modern, who have not had the greateſt Regard to Religion in the Modelling and Governing of Civil Societies; for

* Homo ſine Religione, ſicut equus ſine fræno.

† Συνεκτικὸν ἁπάσης κοινωνίας καὶ νομοθεσίας ἔρεισμα. Plutarchus adverſus Colot. p. 1124.

|| Ἀρχὴ δὲ ἔστω τῶν μὴ ταῦτα ἡμῖν νόμων ἥδε τὶς ἀφ' ἱερῶν ἠγμένη. Plato de Legibus, lib. 6. p. 771.

Τὸ δὲ φυλακτήριον ἐνταῦθά που οἰκοδομητέον τοῖς φύλαξιν ἐν μισθῷ. Plato de Rep. lib. 4. p. 424.

Haud ſcio an pietate ſublata fides etiam & ſocietas humani generis, & juſtitia tollitur. *Cic. de Nat. De. lib. 1. p. 196.*

Οὐκ ἂν δέοιτο τειχῶν, οὐδὲ τριήρων, οὐδὲ νεωρίων δέοιτο αἱ πόλεις, ὦ Ἀλκιβιάδη, εἰ μέλλουσιν εὐδαιμονήσειν, οὐδὲ πλήθους, οὐδὲ μεγέθους ἀνδρῶν ἀρετῆς. Non itaque mœnibus, neque triremibus, neque navalibus indigent civitates, Alcibiades, ad hoc, ut felices ſint, neque verò aut hominum multitudine, potentiæve magnitudine, abſque virtute. *Plato Alcib. p. 134.*

Ἀλλὰ πόλις ἂν μοι δοκεῖ μᾶλλον εὐδαίμων χωρὶς, ἢ πολιτεία τῆς περὶ θεῶν δόξης ἀναιρεθείσης παντάπασι, σύστασιν λαβεῖν ἢ λαβοῦσα τηρῆσαι. Plut. p. 1125.

Pietas ineſſe non poteſt, cum qua ſimul & ſanctitatem & religionem tolli neceſſe eſt: quibus ſublatis perturbatio vitæ ſequitur, & magna confuſio. *Cic. de Nat. De. p. 196.*

Οὐκ ἔστιν ὡσαύτως ἐν πόλει τε, καὶ ἁπάσαις ἀρχαῖς, καὶ ἐξουσίαις ἀποσπασθείσης ἀρετῆς ἕσται τὸ κακῶς πράττειν. Plato Alci. 135.

how

how is it possible to conceive that any State should long stand and be prosperous without Honesty or Peace? Or that it should either enjoy a lasting Peace, or have a general Honesty, without Religion? And therefore it was no weak, tho' a wicked piece of Policy, which they tell us of a King of *Assyria, who chose rather to endeavour to overcome the City of* Babylon, *by sending in of Players, Lewd Women,* &c. *to debauch it,* (by which means he effectually did it, and at last obtained his End) *than to invade it with a powerful Army.* Upon the whole Matter, We may dare to challenge all the Politicians in the World to form a sound Scheme of Government, without supposing and securing Religion for the Basis of it. And as we never heard of a Government that publickly declared for Immorality; so if we could ever suppose there should be any such; nay, that there were such a one, where a considerable number of such Monsters should obtain and keep the Ascendency in any Government, we might conclude what its Fate would sooner or later be. * For when Religion is despis'd, and Virtue is lost in a Nation, which, as hath been prov'd, would in time be the consequence of a publick Contempt of it, how easie a Prey will it prove to its Neighbours? Or how unavoidably will it fall into Divisions, Confusion and Ruine of it self?

* Religio neglecta maximam pestem in Civitatem infert, omnium scelerum fenestram aperit.

Τούτοις ἂν εἰὴ τῶν ἱερωσύναις ἀποδετέον ὧν μὲν τοίνυν ἄνευ πόλις οὐ συνίσταται. Arist. de Rep. lib. 7. p. 583.

Τὴν δὲ εὐδαιμονίαν χωρὶς ἀρετῆς ἀδύνατον ὑπάρχειν. Arist. de Rep. lib. 7. p. 582.

Of such consequence therefore Religion and Virtue seem plainly to be to a Nation, abstracting from the Consideration of a Just God that rules in the Kingdoms of the Earth, that rewards Righteous

teous Nations with Proſperity, and executes Juſtice upon thoſe that are Wicked, which we muſt believe if we have any due regard to Sacred or Prophane Hiſtory, to the Experience and Suffrage of all Ages of the World. For thus it is ſaid in
Iſa. 60. 12. the Holy Scriptures, to this purpoſe; *The Nation and Kingdom that will not ſerve thee, ſhall periſh:*
Pſal. 107. *yea, thoſe Nations ſhall be utterly waſted. A fruitful*
33, 34. *Land he turneth into Barrenneſs for the Wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.* And by the Account that is given us in the Word of God of the Di-
Deut. 21. vine Juſtice, of God's charging Guilt upon Na-
1, 8, 9. tions, as well as upon particular Perſons, and of his Proceeding with the Old World, the *Jewiſh* Nation, *&c.* have we not ſufficient Reaſon to think, that in the ordinary Courſe of God's Providence, a Nation that is eminently Righteous ſhould have his Bleſſing in an eminent Manner; and that a Nation that is remarkably Wicked will feel, ſooner or later, the Effects of his Diſpleaſure? We are acquainted, that before God deſtroyed
Gen. 6. 5. the Old World, *He ſaw that the Wickedneſs of*
Ver. 12. *Man was great in the Earth:* That *all Fleſh had corrupted his Way upon Earth.* And their Sin is given as the Reaſon of their Deſtruction. *And*
Ver. 13. *God ſaid unto* Noah, *The End of all Fleſh is come before me, for the Earth is filled with Violence through them: and behold, I will deſtroy them with the Earth.* Accordingly we may obſerve, that the Providences of God towards the *Jewiſh* Nation were very eminently ſuited to their Behaviour: That tho' the *Jews* were the peculiar People of God, and highly bleſſed, they were frequently puniſhed by God, and at laſt deſtroyed for their
2 Chro. 36. Sins. That their *Kings*, the chief of their *Prieſts*, and their *People*, did wickedly, and

after

after the way of the Heathen, before they were led into Captivity, and Crucified the *Lord of Life, whose Blood they called for upon themselves and their Children*, before they were finally destroyed: And as their Destruction, which our *Saviour foretold*, is, I think, agreed on all hands to have been one of the most dreadful Instances of Misery that have been known to have befallen any Nation either before or since that time. * So *Josephus*, tho' a *Jew*, a celebrated Historian, thus says, *That as he thought no Nation ever suffered such things; so no Nation, from the beginning of the World, did ever so abound in all manner of Impiety*; to which Christians in this Age may, I think, justly add, That by their continuing for so many Hundred Years to be a despised and vagabond People, and scattered throughout the World, without City or Country, without Temple or Altar, that we know of, no Nation seems ever to have been so terrible and lasting a Monument of God's Displeasure for National Sin, as that which this People was guilty of seems to be so much greater, and to have higher Aggravations than the Sin of any other Nation. The Holy Scriptures give the like Account of the Destruction of *Damascus*: *Thus saith the Lord, For three Transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away the Punishment thereof*; so of *Gaza*, of *Tyrus*, of *Edom*, and of *Ammon*. And inform us that God raised up *Cyrus*, calling him by his Name before he was in being, for the Punishment of the Sins of *Babylon*, &c. *Thus saith the Lord to his Anointed, to Cyrus, whose Right-hand I have holden to subdue Nations before him:*

Mat. 27. 25.

Mat. 24. Mark 13.

* Καθ' ἕκαστον μὲν γὰρ τῶν ἐπιχειρούντων τῷ παρόντι μίαν αὐτῶν, ἀδύνατον· συνελόντα δ' εἰπεῖν, μήτε πόλιν ἄλλην τοιαῦτα πεπονθέναι, μήτε γῆν ἐξ αἰῶνος γενέσθαι κακίας γονιμωτέραν. Josephus de Bello Judaico, Lib. 6. cap. 11. p. 933.

Amos 1. 3.

Ver. 6, 9, 11, 13.

Isa. 45. 1.

* Ver. 2. † Ver. 4. * Redderetur merces bonis artibus eorum, *id eſt*, virtutibus quibus ad tantam gloriam pervenire nitebantur, *&c. Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 5. cap.* 15. Non eſt quod de ſummi & veri Dei juſtitia conqueranter; perceperunt mercedem, *ibid.* † In nobis patitur Chriſtus opprobrium, in nobis patitur lex Chriſtiana maledictum. *Salvian.*

him: and I will looſe the Loins of Kings to open before him the two-leaved Gates, and the Gates ſhall not be ſhut. * *I will go before thee, and make the crooked places ſtraight.* † *For Jacob my Servant's ſake, and Iſrael my Elect, I have even called thee by thy Name: I have ſurnamed thee though thou haſt not known me.* And does not prophane Hiſtory tell us, among other Inſtances of this kind that might be heaped up, That as the Pride and Voluptuouſneſs of the *Babylonians*, ſo the Lewdneſs of the *Perſians*, and the Luxury of the *Greeks*, ſeem'd, with their other Sins, to be the remarkable Cauſes of the Ruine of thoſe Empires: And that the *Romans*, who had been a People ſo Eminent in their Morals, that * St. *Auſtin* thought that God might allow them the Government of the World for the Reward of their Virtue, even under the Advantages of the Chriſtian Religion became ſo very Degenerate and Debauched before the Devaſtations and Ruine of their Empire by the poor *Goths*, *Vandals*, and *Huns*, one of whoſe chief Leaders called himſelf *Flagellum Dei*, the *Scourge of God*, that gave Occaſion to a Father to cry out, † *That the Name of Chriſt became a Scorn, and the Chriſtian Religion was reproached by the Lives of Chriſtians.* And to take ſome Notice of our own Country, are we not acquainted, ‖ that the *Britains*, the ancient Inhabitants of it, who had been remarkable for the Uncorruptneſs of their Manners, were degenerated from the Simplicity and Sobriety of their Anceſtours, and were, 'tis

‖ Incolæ aborigines eſſe qui priſcos adhuc vivendi mores retineant, mores ei ſimplices à verſutia & improbitate noſtræ tempeſtatis hominum longè remoti, *Diodorus Siculus*, p. 301.

Incolarum mores quod attinet; fuerunt antiqui Britanni religionis & diſciplinarum cultores maximi, *Sher. de Angl. gent. orig.* p. 14.

Nunc Deo, interdum civibus, nonnunquam etiam tranſmarinis regibus ingrata conſurgit, *Gildas de Excid. Britanniæ*, p. 391.

ſaid,

ſaid, for that Reaſon forewarned of their Miſery before the *Romans* invaded them; and that after the *Romans* quitted their Country there ſucceeded a great Licentiouſneſs, very many after their embracing the Chriſtian Religion turning Idolaters, before the *Saxons* Invaſion of them; a poor People, but it ſeems of more honeſt Manners, that came from the *Northern* Parts of *Germany*; and that before their next ſad Cataſtrophe by the *Normans* Conqueſt of this Nation, Piety and all good Literature were grown out of faſhion; that the Clergy could ſcarce read Divine Service; that the Gentry were given up to Luxury, and a diſſolute Life, and the Meaner ſort ſpent what they had in Rioting, Drunkenneſs, and other Vices, by which means (ſaith the Hiſtorian) Duke *William* had ſo great Advantage, and gained the Conqueſt of them: from whence our *Engliſh* Writers conclude the *Saxon* Hiſtory almoſt in the ſame Words, and to this effect: *If theſe* (ſay they, ſpeaking of their Sins) *were in all probability the Cauſes of God's Judgments on our Anceſtors, ſurely every one in this corrupt Age ought to take care to avoid them, leſt the ſame Judgments fall upon them.* And laſtly, have not the formerly famous *Aſian* and *Greek* Churches been lookt on as ſad Inſtances to confirm us in the Opinion of Ages, That Religion and Virtue are the firmeſt Foundation for the Proſperity of any Nation, and Irreligion the moſt fatal Evil to it; That where there is a general Corruption of Manners things tend to a Diſſolution and Ruine, as well by Natural conſequences, with the Permiſſion of God, as by his Righteous

Judgments; and that therefore it is not to be expected that the crying Sins of a Nation will always escape Punishment unless prevented by Repentance; for the same Causes produce the same Effects, Virtue and Vice do not change their Nature, and *there is no Variableness with our God, whose Justice is immutable. Did not our Fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this Evil upon us, and upon this City?* says the Prophet. And therefore, if after all that our Fathers have told us, and what, I think I may say, some of us have moreover seen with our own Eyes, I mean the late terrible Civil Wars, which, I hope, none will believe for our Piety and Virtue broke out, and lasted so long among us within some of our Memories, and which was soon after succeeded with a dreadful Fire and Plague in this City, and the dreadful Misery that is since that fallen upon our Fellow-Christians in our Neighbouring Countries, we make no better use of what we have seen and heard, and of the various Providences we have been under, than to oppose the Design of them, by continuing impenitent, have we not great reason to fear, that God may either rescue his Gospel from our prophane Outrages, our impious Violations, and give it to some other Nation, that may bring forth better Fruits of it; or in some other way, agreeable to his Infinite Wisdom and Justice, *punish us yet seven times more for our Sins?* Or as *Ezra* expresses it on another Occasion: *And after all that is come upon us for our Evil deeds, and for our great Trespass, seeing that Thou, our God, hast punished us less than our Iniquities deserve, and hast given us such Deliverance as this: Should we again break thy Commandments, and join in Affinity with the People*

Neh. 13. 18

Lev. 26. 18.

Ezra 9. 13.

Ver. 14.

People of theſe Abominations, wouldſt not thou be angry with us till thou hadſt conſumed us, ſo that there ſhould be no remnant nor eſcaping? The Almighty God cannot want Power to effect our Ruine. If we reckon our ſelves ſecure by our preſent Peace, from a late powerful Enemy, (which I ſhall not here enquire into the Reaſons of) He can raiſe up new ones to us. And if we have no Enemies from Abroad, He can ſuffer us to become our own greateſt Enemies, to fall into Confuſion and Ruine by our unchriſtian Quarrels and unhappy Diviſions at Home, which are too many and too high to make this appear to thinking Men a foreign Suppoſition, or an unneceſſary Warning. If He ſtops the Influences of Heaven, or lets looſe the Elements upon us, we periſh. A Peſtilence, or a Deluge, an Earthquake, or a Dearth, might ſoon deſtroy us. And if a general Relaxation of Manners, a Corruption in moſt, if not all Orders and Parties; if a viſible Contempt of the ſincere Practice of Religion, and bare-fac'd, inſolent and unreſtrained Wickedneſs; if a monſtrous Debauchery in Principles as well as Practice; if Contentions and Diviſions, without reaſon and without end, and almoſt without Example; if high Ingratitude to God for many and great Mercies, and a deep Inſenſibility under imminent danger of Judgments, are ſad Indications of a Nation's Degeneracy and Guilt, it cannot, I think, be denied, but that this was too near the diſmal Caſe of *England*, in relation to Religion, when the Endeavours of Reformation, which I have given an account of, began among us, about *Eight* Years ſince, (how much ſoever we may diſlike the Repreſentation of it) and to ſpeak plainly, continues very much ſo ſtill; and therefore, tho' God may give a

People a longer or shorter time of Tryal, as seems fit to his infinite Wisdom, He may defer the Exe-
Gen. 15. 16. cution of his Wrath *till the Iniquities of a People are at the full*, which the longer it is delayed, the severer it may be when it comes: And tho' it is not for us rashly to say, when a Nation hath filled up the Measure of its Sins, and much less to presume to know the Extent of infinite Patience and Forbearance, yet it may, I think, be said in this Case, with Reverence, that considering the great Advantages and Blessings we have so long enjoyed, and what shameful Returns we have made to God for them, there seems not much, if any thing more to be wanting, to make this Nation as guilty as most under Heaven, and to give us a just fear of approaching Judgment, than the Discountenance and Unsuccessfulness of pious and regular Endeavours for the Reforming us; and nothing, I think, can be more reasonably supposed sufficient to remove our Guilt, than some considerable and remarkable Reformation, and perhaps carried through all Ranks and Orders of Men, through all Parts of the Kingdom; such a one as may be in some measure proportioned to the Leprosie of Vice and Prophaneness that seems to have almost over-spread us. But if we do truly repent of all our Abominations, and turn from our wicked ways; if we lay aside our unnecessary Strifes, and our Unchristian Contentions with one another, which we have so long felt the dismal Effects of; if we express our Zeal, and unite our Strength against the Patrons of Vice, who are the Enemies of God and Goodness, more than against those that differ from us in some few things, and those of lesser moment, but agree with us, I conceive, in those that are essential; if we sincerely, and without delay, set about and further

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all pious and proper Endeavours for a National Reformation, truly purſue the things that belong to our Peace, it ſtill ſeems with us a Day of Mercy, and the Scriptures give us Encouragement to hope, that *we may not periſh.* For thus it is ſaid, *At what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to deſtroy it: If that Nation againſt whom I have pronounced, turn from their Evil, I will repent of the Evil that I thought to do unto them.* Jer. 18. 7, 8.

Having thus endeavoured to prove the *Common Obligation* which lies upon *All Men*, as Chriſtians, and as Members of the Community, to uſe their ſincere Endeavours for a *General* and *National Reformation*; and the *Special Obligations* of *Governours* and *Miniſters*, of *Subordinate Magiſtrates* and *Inferior Officers*, from either the Nature of their *Office* and *Truſt*, or their expreſs *Oaths* to this purpoſe; and having more largely inſiſted on the Reaſons for *private Perſons* giving of Informations of the Violations of the Laws of Religion and their Country; and the *Magiſtrates Obligation* highly to encourage thoſe who do ſo, to make this their excellent Service to their Country as ſafe and as eaſie to them as they can, by directing their Judgments, excuſing their innocent Inadvertencies, by making Examples of any obſtinate Criminals that ſhall dare impiouſly to affront and obſtruct them in it; and having likewiſe repreſented the Danger of *God's Judgments*, and of *our Ruine*, if we continue unreformed; and the *Bleſſings* and *Advantages* that we may hope to obtain to our ſelves, our Country, and our Poſterity, in the hearty forwarding juſt and pious Deſigns and Endeavours for ſuch a Reformation; as *Virtue* is the way to the Happineſs of particular Perſons, of private Families, and to the Proſperity of

Nations; and the Suppreſſing of Vice and Prophaneneſs by Humane Laws, that are agreeable to the Laws of God, ſeems to be the neareſt nnd moſt probable way, in our preſent Circumſtances, for the retrieving of the Virtue of the Nation; (without which, if we could ſuppoſe that this Kingdom would continue to be proſperous, I do not eaſily conceive how wiſe and good Men ſhould either take much Pleaſure in Living otherwiſe than in Obedience to the Will, and for the Glory of God, and the working out their own Salvation, or in the Thoughts of leaving a Poſterity behind them in a Nation where there is no more Religion, or even common Honeſty;) I intended, I ſay, having done this, in the next place to offer ſome Arguments againſt thoſe Vices that are moſt reigning among us; as *Lewdneſs*, *Prophane Swearing* and *Curſing*, *Drunkenneſs*, &c. in hopes that the Repreſentation of the Baſeneſs, the Folly and Beſtiality of thoſe Sins, together with the various and great Miſchiefs they bring upon the Publick, but more eſpecially often upon thoſe unhappy Men that are addicted to them, in reſpect to their Eſtates and Reputation, their Perſons and Poſterity, their Bodies and Souls, would ſhew ſo much the Evil and Deformity of them, that it might be a means to keep ſome at leaſt from falling in Love with them, and of diſingaging others from them who are already enſnared in them, even as the Sight of a Drunkard to a thinking Man is a good Lecture againſt Drunkenneſs: But theſe Sheets growing to a Bulk, far beyond what I at firſt propoſed, I ſhall lay aſide, perhaps for ſome other Occaſion, the Materials which were prepared for this purpoſe; and I ſhall the rather do ſo, ſince

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* theſe Vices are plainly condemned by the Word of God, which expreſly excludes *Drunkards* and *Unclean Perſons*, &c. *from the Kingdom of Heaven*; and that we find, by ſad Experience, that thoſe who are fully reconciled to their Luſts, who are miſerably abandoned to the Conduct of Cuſtom and ill Example, ſeem too generally almoſt Deaf to the Calls of Conſcience, to all Repreſentations of this kind, nay, often even to the powerful Rhetorick of the Goſpel; at leaſt they frequently make, for want of Conſideration, and other proper means, no great and laſting Impreſſions upon them. And this, I conceive, makes the uſe of other Methods with ſuch Men neceſſary, not only for their own ſakes, but for the publick Safety, that thoſe that are Lethargick, and almoſt *dead in their Sins*, yet having Senſes ſtill to feel the Stroaks of Juſtice, may, tho' never ſo ſtubborn, be bowed in ſome meaſure to diſcipline, and puniſh'd into a better outward Behaviour, if they cannot into ſuch a ſerious Conſideration of their Sin and Folly as may end in an inward and entire Reformation of their Lives, which is by no means to be deſpaired of. For as the allowed Habits of theſe Sins exclude Men from the Kingdom of Heaven, in the Opinion of Divines, they ought to ſhut out thoſe who are guilty of them from the Communion with the Church on Earth, till they give ſome ſigns of their Repentance, as, 'tis allowed, they would have done if they had lived in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, when ſuch Offenders, which now make too great a part of the viſible Church, were looked on as a kind of Monſters, and, like putrefy'd Members, were cut off, as being not only extreamly dangerous, but very noiſome to the Body. But till the Eccleſiaſtical Power,

* Matt. 5. 28, 34. Matt. 15. 18, 19. Rom. 1. 24. --27. 29. 13. 14. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.-13. 18. Gal. 5. 19. 21. Eph. 5. 3, 5, 6. Col. 3. 5, 6.

Power, which is now ſo weakned, and hath, to ſpeak juſtly, loſt its Credit, is recovered to its Primitive Deſign, and the ancient Diſcipline of the Church is in ſome meaſure reſtored, which, 'tis to be hoped, we ſhall not always think ſufficient, eſpecially under the preſent Reign, publickly to lament the loſs of once a Year, in the Office for *Aſh-Wedneſday*, but ſhall in good earneſt endeavour to reſtore. There is, I conceive, evidently greater reaſon to engage the ſecular Arm in this matter, that thoſe upon whom the gentle Methods of Perſwaſion have little or no force, and whom the Eccleſiaſtical Power does not, and will not, take any Notice of, ſhould be ſeverely puniſhed, and reſtrained by the Civil Government; that they ſhould be treated as a ſort of Out-Laws, and as common Enemies to their Country: For publick Immoralities are Offences againſt the Peace and Happineſs of Mankind, againſt the Government and the Laws, as well as againſt the Chriſtian Religion, which is not only now incorporated into the Law of the Land, but does above all other things promote the Safety and Proſperity of Government, and of particular Perſons, which Offences of this kind directly tend to the deſtroying of, even to the diſſolving the band of Humane Society; and if ſo, ſurely it behoves good Men, by all proper meaſures, to aſſiſt Magiſtrates in their Endeavours effectually to ſuppreſs them. If bad Men don't approve of theſe Methods 'tis no wonder; they are Enemies to good Order, Law and Juſtice, becauſe theſe things are troubleſome to them. There is no doubt but the *Gallows* is a great Grievance to Murtherers, the Diſcipline of *Bridewell* to Whores, the *Pillory* to the Perjured, and the *Stocks* to Drunkards: But ſuch Grievances

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as theſe are, I conceive, of near as long ſtanding as Government, and will not be thought proper to be laid aſide whilſt it laſts, or at leaſt till there is not ſo much Occaſion for them, ſince, as hath been proved, its Intereſt and chief Buſineſs is to cheriſh and ſupport Religion, and, by conſequence, to take care that it be not treated with any diſreſpect, particularly, that it be not made the Scorn of any Order or Body of Men, the common Subject of prophane Play-Houſes, or the Sport of Buffoons; and that the open Violations of it by *Prophane Swearing* and *Curſing*, *Drunkenneſs*, *Lewdneſs*, &c. be ſuppreſſed, as all wiſe Nations, I conceive, have ever done, and ever will do.

Againſt theſe Enormities therefore, that are the Plagues of Government, the Enemies of our Peace, the Diſhonour of our Religion, and the Reproach of our Nation, have the *Societies of Reformation* applied themſelves, with ſo great Succeſs, as to give ſo very promiſing hopes as have been repreſented, of a general Concurrence and Union of the Virtuous part of the Nation in the ſame Deſign, and in conſequence of a National Reformation; and their Endeavours have been carried on, as hath been obſerved, for above *Eight* Years, with as little or leſs occaſion given to their Enemies of Objection either to the Methods of their Proceedings, or to the Behaviour of the Perſons concerned in them, as perhaps have been often known in matters of the greateſt conſequence, where ſuch a number of Perſons have been engaged, (tho if the Prudence of ſome good Men, who are either already engaged, or that ſhall hereafter be concerned in this Undertaking, is or ſhould be leſs than their Zeal, it will, I hope, be far from giving wiſe and well-meaning Men a juſt Prejudice to the

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Design it self, or keeping them from Assisting in it.) But, blessed be God, a more glorious Prospect hath been lately given us by the *Address* of the late House of Commons to His Majesty, for the Suppressing of *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, and His Majesty's *Proclamation* in pursuance of it, and His princely Word in His Gracious *Speech* to both Houses of Parliament. We have now then, 'tis evident, His Majesty's positive Commands, together with the concurrent Advice in this Matter of the late great Representative Body of the Commons of *England*, for things, I conceive, not only unquestionably lawful, but highly important and necessary for the strict Execution of the known Laws of the Land against *Prophaneness* and *Immorality*, agreeably to the Word of God, that acquaints us, That the Magistrate *beareth not the Sword in Vain*: That *Rulers are not a Terrour to good Works, but to the evil*, &c. Whoever therefore they are that in this Case oppose the King's Commands, who either openly obstruct, or secretly undermine the Endeavours of those who act in this Affair in Obedience to the Will of God, the Command of the King, and for the Good of their Country, will, I think, find it somewhat difficult to acquit themselves from great Impiety.

Rom. 13. 4. Ver. 3.

And now can any that love their God, their Religion, or their Country, hear of these transporting things without being affected thereby with greater Joy than any Success in their own secular Concerns would give them, and without thinking themselves under high Obligations, after they have pretended to Fast, and Pray, and Mourn for our publick Sins, for so many Years past, (as most, if not all Orders of Men and Parties among us have done) to do what they are able in their several Stations

Stations for the Suppreſſing of *Prophaneneſs* and *Immorality*, and for the perfecting of this great Work of REFORMATION, which, I conceive, it had been our Duty to promote, if we had not met with ſo much Encouragement and Aſſiſtance from our Governours? But how much ſtronger Obligations do now lie upon us to do it? And how ſhameful and inexcuſable will our Neglect of it be, now we have ſuch an Opportunity by His Majeſty's repeated Declarations for our Engaging in it, by the Advances that are already made, and the Methods that are laid, as perhaps may never again be offered us if we neglect this? in Proſecution whereof it would, I think, become us to adventure all our deareſt Intereſts in this World, nay, a Thouſand Lives, if we had them to loſe. Behold then a glorious Opportunity for all that make a Profeſſion of Religion, or any pretence to Virtue, of what Rank ſoever, to ſignalize their Love and Faithfulneſs to their great Lord and Maſter, their Neighbour, and their Country. To all *Orders of Men* therefore, whoſe Service His Majeſty hath required to promote this great, this neceſſary Work, and who would not ſhare in the dreadful Guilt and laſting Infamy of neglecting and refuſing to promote a *Reformation of Manners*, which now ſeems to be put very much in our Power, with God's Bleſſing, to ſee effected, I ask leave, upon theſe glorious Encouragements, with all due reſpect, to addreſs my ſelf.

To the NOBILITY, that they would be pleaſed to conſider, That true Greatneſs doth not conſiſt in the having of ſwelling Titles, high Places, great Power, or large Territories, which, tho' they may be ſometimes the Reward of virtuous

tuous and brave Actions, as they ought to be, are often the Gifts of Nature, and it may be too frequently the Acquests of such Crimes as deserve Punishment instead of Recompence: That the Persons who in all Ages have been most beloved and reverenced when Alive, and most honoured by wise and good Men when Dead, have been those who have been most beneficent and serviceable to the World; not those who have amassed the greatest Estates, and acquired the loftiest Titles to themselves: The blind Heathens erected not their Altars to those that they did not think were some way or other useful or serviceable to Mankind: That they would therefore be perswaded, that nothing will render them so much Blessings to their Country, so truly noble and esteemed, as their being Patrons of Religion and Virtue: That they are not in their high Stations too great for that Employment, which is the greatest Glory of Princes, to set up their Standards for Religion, and declare War against Vice and Prophaneness, * after the Example, and under the Authority of such a Prince and Leader as hath in his late *Proclamation* graciously required it of them, and hath declared, in his *Speech* to both Houses of Parliament, that *He esteems it one of the greatest Advantages of Peace, that He is now at Leisure to apply himself to the Suppressing of Prophaneness and Immoralities*; and hath thereby given us some reason to hope, that He may think it a far greater Glory of his Reign to be an Instrument in God's Hand of delivering us from the Slavery of our Vices, of making us a virtuous, and, by consequence, a happy People, than in procuring us any other present and secular Felicities and Advantages, and at last leaving us deluged in such Impieties

* Quam difficile est principem sui dissimilem formare reipublicam. Si velis replicare memoriam temporum, quæcunq; mutatio morum in principibus extiterit, eandem populo secutam. *Cic. lib* 3 *de Legibus.*

Impieties as Infidels abhor, and which may make God our Enemy, and draw down his Vengeance upon us: That they would for this purpoſe conſider the Influence of their Authority, their Intereſt, their Revenues, and their Example, and employ, which they cannot without high Ingratitude omit, theſe and the other Advantages they have above Men of lower Ranks, for the Glory of that God, by whoſe Permiſſion they have them, for the Noble Purpoſes of Oppoſing and Suppreſſing Debauchery and Prophaneneſs, the Retrieving the Reputation of Virtue, the Furthering the Intereſts of Religion, and the Saving of their Country, which hath ſeemed to have declared in favour of Vice and Ruine, and thereby approve themſelves to the King, as He hath now aſſured them they will, to the wiſe and virtuous part of the Nation, to their own Conſciences, to their Poſterity, and, above all, to the moſt High God.

To the Reverend the CLERGY, That they who are looked upon as the Ambaſſadours of the Great God of Heaven and Earth, and ſent upon the moſt important Buſineſs of *Reconciling Men to God*, and *Watching for their Souls*, and have, as I conceive, their Honour, their Dignities and their Revenues given them, without the common Incumbrances of other Men, in regard to their Sacred Office, and that they may attend without Worldly Cares, and with the greateſt Advantage to their Spiritual Employment, would conſider, whether they have not a more favourable Opportunity for the Work of their Miniſtry, and a National Reformation, at this time, than they have had for many Years paſt. They cannot, I humbly preſume, but be ſenſible of the moſt deplorable

2 Cor. 5. 18, 20. Heb. 13. 17.

deplorable Degeneracy of this Nation, that the great Decay of Religion, and the Leproſie of Vice and Prophaneneſs with which it is almoſt over-ſpread, does threaten its Ruine; and that they have great reaſon to take to heart the no greater Succeſs of their Endeavours for the Reforming of us; that their Diſcipline, which if it had been in force, might have proved a Bank againſt the Flood of Wickedneſs that is broken in upon us, is now ſo loſt, that it is of little uſe to them for this purpoſe; that there appears too great ground to fear, that the Tide of Wickedneſs will not be ſtopped whilſt Religion is openly diſhonoured, Virtue deſpiſed, and Vice and Prophaneneſs are ſo daring and triumphant, that Men commit them not only with Impunity, but Glory in them, ſo as to eſteem it an act of Gallantry to ridicule their Sacred Office, to contemn things Sacred, and an Ornament of Style to imprecate Damnation upon themſelves and others. Is not this a Time for them that are Spiritual *Watchmen, and Overſeers of the Flock of Chriſt*, as they have a Concern for God's Honour, and would prevent his Judgments falling upon us; as they would conſult the Honour and Intereſt of their Sacred Order, and their own Reputation, to concur with His Majeſty's pious Declarations for this purpoſe, and cheerfully to embrace the Aſſiſtance of the Civil Power for the Vindicating of the Honour of God's Laws, the Stopping the Avenues to notorious Enormities, the breaking the helliſh Confederacies, and the taking out of publick View the contagious Examples of bad Men; and by theſe Methods to prepare Men the better for the Reſtoration of godly Diſcipline, for the greater Influence of their Doctrine, and good Exam-

Iſa. 52. 8. 56. 10. Acts 20. 28.

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ples upon their Minds? Is not this a Time for them to favour the ſucceſsful Endeavours of the *Societies of Reformation*, which are levell'd at the ſtrong holds of Debauchery; and the *Religious Societies*, that are now ſpreading through the Kingdom, that ſeem ſo directly to tend to the Promoting the Power of Religion, ſo far as they carry on thoſe great Ends, (wherein we may, I think, appeal to the whole Chriſtian World whether they do not do it) and readily to accept of the Aſſiſtance that is now, or hereafter may be given them by Chriſtians of any Denomination, in the common cauſe of Chriſtianity? And if they can think of any other or better Meaſures than thoſe that are recommended in theſe Papers, that may promote the Glory of God, and the Good of Souls, *for whom Chriſt died*, and their own comfortable Account of themſelves to Him *that will judge the Quick and Dead*, to engage in them without delay, with united Counſels and Endeavours, with double Diligence and Zeal, and in Conjunction with all the various Works of their Miniſtry, among which their going *from Houſe to Houſe* for the enquiring into the Spiritual State of the Souls of thoſe that are committed to their Charge, and the applying proper Directions and Encouragements accordingly, in the Judgment of the moſt pious Divines I have had the Honour to know, is thought to be a very uſeful Method, is what * one of the moſt Learned Prelates of this Age and Nation hath in his printed Charge to the Clergy of his Dioceſs put them in mind of; and which † another of our Learned Biſhops hath told this Sacred Order, in his *Paſtoral Care*, publiſhed by the particular Approbation of the late Great Primate Arch-Biſhop *Tillotſon*, is

2 Tim. 4. 1, 2.

Acts 20, 20, 21.

* *Dr.* Stillingfleet *the late Biſhop of* Worceſter's *Charge to the Clergy of his Dioceſs, p.* 25.

† *The Biſhop of* Saliſbury's *Paſtoral Care, p.* 203, 207.

to be lookt on as the Foundation (an Exemplary Life being ſuppoſed) on which all the other parts of the Miniſterial Office may be well managed; and which, he ſays, will ſeem no hard matter to ſuch as have a right ſenſe of their Ordination Vows, of the Dignity of their Function, or the Value of Souls.

To the *Subordinate* MAGISTRATES *of all kinds*, That they would make juſt Reflections upon that terrible and laſting Imputation that they do now lie under by His Majeſty's *Proclamation*, (which is to be read *Four* times a Year in all Churches, and at the Aſſizes and Seſſions throughout the Nation) and the *Addreſs* of the late Honourable Houſe of Commons to the King, *of their being ſo great a Cauſe of the Debauchery and Prophaneneſs of the Kingdom, by their ill Examples and Negligence in their Office:* That they would conſider, as hath been obſerved, how many Nations have been ruined, and Cities brought to a heap of Rubbiſh, for their Immoralities, which the Magiſtrates Vigilance might have prevented: That
Rom. 13. 1. *Power comes from God*, the Fountain of all Power; and that they are ſuppoſed to be entruſted with it for his *Honour*, and the *Good* of his *People:* That by their faithfully Executing the Laws againſt Offenders, particularly thoſe that are made for the Honour of God, the Suppreſſing of Prophaneneſs and Immorality, they are to be a *Terrour to Evil doers*; and in order to this, that they would therefore remember, That as the pooreſt Wretch hath
Matt. 25. 14, 15, &c. *a Talent* that he muſt render an *Account* of, they muſt expect one day to appear at a Tribunal themſelves, and give an account of the diſcharge of their Oaths and Truſts, of the Employment of their Authority, and their other Advantages, and for

for the Deluge of Evils that either hath or may fall upon the Nation through their wilful neglect of their Duty; for our Blessed Saviour hath told us, That *unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.* Luk. 12. 48. And the Authour of the Book of *Wisdom* thus expresses himself to this purpose; *Hear therefore, O ye Kings, and understand; learn,* Wisd. 6. 1. *ye that be Judges of the Ends of the Earth. Give* 2. *ear, you that rule the People, and glory in the Multitude of Nations; for Power is given you of the Lord,* 3. *and Sovereignty from the Highest, who shall try your Works, and search out your Counsels, because, being* 4. *Ministers of his Kingdom, you have not judged aright, nor kept the Law, nor walked after the Counsel of God. Horribly and speedily shall he come upon you: for a* 5. *sharp Judgment shall be to them that be in high Places. For Mercy will soon pardon the Meanest, but mighty* 6. *Men shall be mightily tormented.*

To the GENTRY and COMMONALTY *of the Nation*, that they consider, That tho' they have not the particular Oaths and Vows, the Trusts and Authority of any of the Orders I have mentioned, they have notwithstanding their Baptismal Engagements upon 'em, which they own when they come to the Holy Communion; and that if they would acquit themselves as Christians, they must endeavour to be such in all their Relations; to behave themselves as good Magistrates and Subjects, as good Citizens, and Members of their Community, as well as good Masters and Servants, good Parents and Children; but that they cannot be reasonably thought to be so without having a Love to God, a Zeal for his Honour, or a Concern for the Welfare of their Neighbours, and of the Community of which they are a part;

and that it may be doubted whether they can have either, if they can contentedly hear, without any concern, Men openly affront their God, bid defiance to his Laws, go on with a full Career to Deſtruction, and bring Decay and Ruine upon their Country, when, 'tis evident, they may uſe proper means to prevent them, among others, particularly by their giving of Informations of enormous Offences to the Magiſtrate, (which I have in another place more largely inſiſted on) and which they have at this time ſo fair an Opportunity to employ as is offer'd them by the Declarations of the Government, and the Aſſiſtance of ſuch Bodies of Chriſtians that are not only in and about this City, but that are ſpreading through the Cities and Corporations of the Kingdom. And do you think it diſhonourable for you to conceal any Offences that endanger the Government, or any Injuries that are done to your Neighbour, when you can do him right by the bare diſcovering of it to the Magiſtrate? Is it reckoned an act of Bravery to adventure your Lives in the taking of a Thief, or a Murtherer? an act of Charity to prevent any Injury to your Neighbour in his Civil Concerns; to hinder a Fool or a Lunatick from wounding of his Body, or deſtroying his Life? And is not a ſincere endeavour to prevent the publick Diſhonour of the Name, the Day, and the Laws of God, by acquainting the Magiſtrate with theſe high Offences, in order to the Suppreſſing of them, as is done with general Approbation and Applauſe in other ordinary Caſes, when Mens private Rights, the Security of the Government, or the Welfare of the Nation is concerned, an honourable Work, and becoming Chriſtians? Does it become a Diſciple, a Soldier

dier of Chriſt Jeſus to ſee Him publickly affronted; to hear his Name and Wounds mentioned, in a Chriſtian State, oftner in horrid Oaths and Execrations than in ſerious Diſcourſes; his Laws trampled on; and their Fellow-Chriſtians to live in the open Commiſſion of ſuch Sins as manifeſtly tend to bring great Calamities upon them in this World, to deſtroy their Souls, and draw down National Judgments, without taking any kind of Notice of theſe things, and only for fear of meeting with reproachful Words, or rude Treatment (which yet the Magiſtrate, if he hath a juſt ſenſe of his Duty, will not ſuffer) from a hardned Offender, or the Advocates of Vice; from ſuch whoſe Commendations a virtuous Man would be inclined to look on as a real Diſparagement, and their Company a Scandal, and when, in the diſcharge of what they juſtly apprehend to be their Duty, they may have, for their Comfort and Support, ſome of the great Rewards of Religion in this World, the Approbation of their own Conſciences, and of good Men, with the hopes of an Everlaſting Reward on the other ſide of the Grave? Can this be imagined to be a ſignification of a Zeal for God, of our *Loving Him with all our Hearts*, &c. or *our Neighbour as our ſelves?* Does this Behaviour *adorn the Goſpel?* Would the Chriſtians of old have thought well of it? Or is it ſufficient for us to call our ſelves the Diſciples of the Bleſſed Jeſus, *who went about doing good*, without endeavouring, in any degree, to follow his glorious Example?

Matt. 22. 37,38,39. Tit. 2. 10. Act. 10. 38.

Herein then our Gentry and Commonalty ſeem to have a great Opportunity of furthering the Work of Reformation: But this is not all the Advantage they have, if the Laws that relate to

Religion are upon ſo many and ſuch momentous Conſiderations thus zealouſly to be put in Execution, it is, I think, evident, that not only thoſe Perſons that violate and contemn thoſe Laws, but thoſe that are unconcerned for, and diſcourage the Execution of them, cannot, with any Colour of Reaſon be eſteemed Friends to their Country, but rather as unworthy to live in it, and enjoy the common Benefits of it; * and if ſo, they are unqueſtionably much more unfit for, and unworthy of *Poſts of Honour and Truſt*; and thoſe that concern themſelves for the Election or Promotion of ſuch Perſons to publick Places, when Men of Virtue may be eaſily found to accept of them, and perhaps offer themſelves to their Choice, upon the account of their Titles or Eſtates, of their Relation or Friendſhip to them, and I think I may further add, for their being of their Faction or Party, may deſervedly be judged to behave themſelves very unbecoming good Common-Wealths-Men and good Chriſtians, to act therein as very miſchievous Members of the Community, and even Enemies to their Religion and Country; on the contrary, they who are truly Religious, who not only keep the Laws themſelves, but are diligent to execute the Laws, or zealouſly encourage and aſſiſt others in the furthering the Execution of them, are to be looked on by thoſe that make any juſt pretence to Virtue, as Benefactors to the Community, of which they are Members, and as proper

* Magnam juſtitiæ & virtutis partem habet, qui honore dignos honorat. In Civitate ſtudioſa felicitatis nunquam opes anteponi debent virtuti, nè hanc ob cauſam omnibus deſiderio divitiarum captis, contemptus & neglectus virtutis innaſcatur animis in republica. Nam ubi virtus ſpernitur potentes omne malorum genus producunt.

Omnes quidem Magiſtratus in bene conſtituenda republica convenit eſſe virtute præditos, ſed maximè eos qui ſenatoriæ dignitatis gradum obtinent. Unde in antiquorum rebuſpublicis ſtatuæ, arcus triumphales, ſepulchra publica, laudationes, & alia id genus meritis tribuantur. *Grim. de opt. Sen. p.* 194.

Perſons

Persons to be honourably distinguished, which it behoves all Men to consider, who are any ways concerned in this Matter, and would shew their sincere Regard for the Interest of Religion or their Country, particularly the *Gentry and Commonalty of England*, to whom I am addressing my self, in the Election of their Representatives in Parliament, of Magistrates in Corporations, and Subordinate Officers in them, and all other Places throughout the Kingdom, * on whose Behaviour the Welfare of the Nation does so much depend, lest when they might have served the true Interests of Religion and the Nation, by their making Choice of such worthy Persons as might have proved great Blessings to us, if they had been thus employed, by their Faithfulness in their Trusts, and by the happy Influence of their good Examples; they, on the other hand, by being instrumental in the Election or Promotion of vicious Men, especially after the evil of their doing so is represented to them, may perhaps draw a Guilt upon themselves, of *Partaking in other Mens Sins*, of being Accessory, in some degree, to the Mischief that is done by the Negligence and Unfaithfulness of such Persons in their Duty whom they make

* Ἐγὼ δὲ φημὶ, τὰς μὲν ἰδέας τῶν πολιτειῶν τρεῖς εἶναι μόνας, ὀλιγαρχίαν, δημοκρατίαν, μοναρχίαν· τῶν δὲ ἐν ταύταις οἰκούντων, ὅσοι μὲν εἰώθασιν ἐπὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς καθιστάναι, καὶ τὰς ἀλλὰς πράξεις τοὺς ἱκανωτάτους τῶν πολιτῶν, καὶ τοὺς μέλλοντας ἄριστα καὶ δικαιότατα τῶν πραγμάτων ἐπιστατήσειν, τούτους μὲν ἐν ἁπάσαις τῇ πολιτείαις καλῶς οἰκήσειν, καὶ πρὸς σφᾶς αὐτοὺς, καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους· τοὺς δὲ τοῖς πονηροτάτοις, καὶ θρασυτάτοις ἐπὶ ταῦτα χρωμένους, καὶ τῶν μὲν τῇ πόλει συμφερόντων μηδὲν φροντίζουσιν, ὑπὲρ δὲ τῆς αὐτῶν πλεονεξίας, ἑτοίμοις οὖσιν ὁτιοῦν πάσχειν, τὰς δὲ τούτων πόλεις ὁμοίως οἰκήσεσθαι, τῇ δὲ προεστώτων πονηρίαις, θέλοντας, τούτοις αὖ τοὐναντίον κακίστοις ἑαυτοῖς τῆς καὶ τοῖς πολίταις εἶναι νομίζω· τοὺς δὲ τοιούτους ἐναλλὰξ ποτὲ μὴν χεῖρον, ποτὲ βέλτιον πράξειν. Isoc. Path. p. 513.

Choice of, as well as by the malignant Influence of their ill Examples upon others. Hath God Almighty ſaid by the Prophet, *Them that honour me I will honour; and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* Hath Holy *David* ſaid, *Mine Eyes ſhall be upon the Faithful of the Land, that they may dwell with me; He that walketh in a perfect way, he ſhall ſerve me.* Hath the King lately declared in his *Proclamation, That vicious Men are a Diſcredit to his Kingdom, and that he will diſcountenance and puniſh Immorality and Prophaneneſs in Perſons of the higheſt and loweſt degree, particularly in ſuch as are employed near his Royal Perſon; and that he will, upon all Occaſions, diſtinguiſh Men of Piety and Virtue by Marks of his Royal Favour?* And laſtly, hath the Commons of *England*, aſſembled in a late Parliament, in their *Humble Addreſs* to His Majeſty, repreſented to Him, *That the Debauchery of the Nation is chiefly owing to the Negligence and ill Example of Magiſtrates; and that the Countenancing and Preferring of Virtuous, and the Diſcouraging of Vicious Men, is a proper way to ſuppreſs it?* *And can Men that have any Principles of Religion, and Love to their Country, that ſhall duly and impartially conſider this, be inſtrumental in promoting of prophane and vicious Men to Places of Honour and Authority, and chuſe to entruſt with them the high Concerns of Religion and our greateſt Temporal Intereſts? How far Ignorance, Prejudice, or Inconſideration, may have hitherto been an Excuſe for any concerned herein, I ſhall not preſume to determine, but I may be allowed to ſay, that, 'tis to be hoped, it will not be hereafter pretended by any Men who are ſincerely concerned for the Honour and Intereſt of Religion, and the Security and Proſperity of their Country, who having

* Omnino ab hominibus honoris debetur, quos honore deus dignatus eſt.

having this Matter laid before them, shall not only consider the fatal Consequences of their own ill Conduct in this Matter, but the many and almost unspeakable Evils that this Nation hath so long groaned under by the Election and Promotion of wicked Men to Places of Honour or Power; and, on the contrary, what a glorious face of things we might expect to see, if Men of all Ranks, as well as those to whom I am addressing my self, would acquit themselves herein, as Natural Reason as well as Religion may convince them they ought, in the Discouraging or Opposing, in their several Stations, the Election and Promotion of wicked Men to publick Posts, and thereby keeping them from doing so much Mischief as they have undeniably the greatest Advantage for their doing in them. * And if we will not be moved herein by either Religious or Civil Considerations, I must ask leave to say, that we are sunk below Heathenism in this respect, ap. Stc.

* Σόλων ὁ σοφὸς ἐκεῖνος ἔλεγεν, ὅτι πόλιν, ὡς ἔοικε, τὰ μέλλουσαν σώζεσθαι τε καὶ δαιμονήσειν εἰς δύναμιν ἀνθρωπίνην, δεῖ καὶ ἀναγκαῖον τιμὰς καὶ ἀτιμίας ἀφανέμειν ὀρθῶς, ἔστι δ' ὀρθῶς, ἂν μὲν τιμιώτατα μὲν καὶ πρῶτα περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀγαθὰ κεῖσθαι, σωφροσύνης ὑπαρχούσης αὐτῇ· τούτων δ' ἂν ἐκ τοῦ τὴν βαίνην νομοθέτης ἢ πόλις, εἰς τιμὰς, ἢ χρήματα προάγουσα, ἄθ' ὅσον, ἢ τὴν πολιτικὸν ἄνδρα πράγμα. Plato de Legibus, lib. 3. p. 817.

Oportere dicimus Civitatem quæ pro humanis viribus salva fœlixque futura sit, rectè honores & opprobria distribuere, recta autem distributio est, ut prima & maxima honoranda censeantur animi bona, si adjuncta illis temperantia sit. Hæc si quis Legislator civitasve transgreditur, neque sanctè neque civiliter facit,

Περὶ μὲν δὴ τῶν πολιτειῶν οἶμαι πᾶσι δοκεῖν δεινότατον μὲν εἶναι τὸ τὰ αὐτὰ ἀξιοῦσθαι τοὺς χρηστοὺς καὶ τοὺς πονηροὺς, δικαιότατον δὲ πραττόμενον καὶ τιμᾶσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἑκάστους. Isoc. Nic. p. 57.

Quod igitur ad respublicas attinet, omnes mihi assentiri arbitror, iniquissimum esse ut eadem bonis & improbis tribuantur, æquissimum vero ut ea cujusque & fortuna sit, & dignitas quam meretur.

the

*Is ordo, vitio careto, cæteris ſpecimen eſto. Præclara iſta

the formerly famous * *Roman* and † *Grecian* Common-Wealths having had a great regard to Virtue in the Choice of their Senators and Magiſtrates, which ſeems to have been one of the greateſt Cauſes of their Stability and Proſperity.

lex (ait Cicero,) nam cum omni vitio carere lex jubeat, nè veniat in eum ordinem, unquam vitii particeps, *Cic. de Leg. l. 6. p.* 336.

Delecti quibus corpus annis infirmum, ingenium ſapientia validum, *Saluſt.* In Senatorib. legendis, ætatis, Magiſtratus, *&c.* habita ratio, *Sig. de Ju. Ci. R.*

In pluribus Romanum Senatum imitabantur Decuriones, nec minor annis 25 decurio creabatur, nec major 55, meritis enim & facultatibus digniſſimi eligebantur, *Pancirolus de Magiſtrat. Rom. p.* 3, 4.

Eadem forma in elegendis Duumviris, quæ in creandis Decurionibus obſervabatur, *&c.* ſi fortè recuſandi juſtam honoris cauſam habuiſſent, alii eorum loco congruo tempore ſubſtitui poſſent, *Pancirolus, p.* 8.

† Apud Lacedæmonios Senatui & reliquis virtus potius & merita ſuffragabantur. Nam virtutis præcipuè habita fuit ratio, ut in aliis omnibus apud eos; ita etiam in quibuſvis Magiſtratibus conferendis. *Nic. Cragius de Rep. Lacedæm. l. 2. p.* 82. Ætas deinde juſta lege quaſi annuaria definita in Senatoribus fuit annorum 60. *Crag. lib. 2. p.* 113. Cæterum vita honeſtè acta in Senatoribus præcipuè deſiderabatur, *Crag. p.* 114.

Καθίσασι δὲ αὐτοῖς ἐκ τῶν ἐκ παιδὸς εἰς γήρας σωφρονῶν. Æſch. Tim. p. 288.

Δίκαιόν μὲν, ὦ Λακεδαιμόνιοι τοῦτο γε τῇ πόλει ὑμῶν ἀποδιδόναι, ὅτι πενίᾳ καὶ πλούτῳ, καὶ βασιλείᾳ, καὶ ἰδιωτείᾳ διαφέρουσαν, ἐσθ' ὑμῶν τίμιον τρόπον νέμειν. Οὐ γὰρ δὴ δεῖ καλὴν πόλιν τὴν εὐπορεχόσας ὅτι τὶς δὴ πλούτῳ διαφέρων ἄνευ τινὸς ἀρετῆς. Plato de Leg. lib. 3. p. 816.

Ἀθλον ἡ ἀρχὴ αὐτὴ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐστιν. Ariſtot. de Rep. Laced. lib. 2. p. 330.

Ἀλλ' ἐν ἀγαθοῖς καὶ σωφρόσιν ἀεὶ ζῆν καὶ σωφρονίζεσθαι, ἴσθ' κεἰθέντα, νικητηρίον ἔχειν τῆς ἀρετῆς διὰ βίου. Plutarch. Lycurg. p. 55.

Judicium apud Athenienſes conſtituebatur quod illi δοκιμασίαν vocabant, in quo Senatorum qui lecti erant vita diligentèr exquirebatur, *Sigon.* 495.

Omnes oportebat Magiſtratus vitæ morúmque ſuorum antequam Magiſtratum inirent rationem in foro apud judices reddere, nè quis Magiſtratum ullum gerere poſſet, qui impudicitiæ aut alio turpitudinis genere notatus fuiſſet, *Sigonius de Repub. Athen. lib. 2. p.* 492.

Καὶ διὰ ταῦτης ἔχειν τὴν πόλιν, ἐκ ἐξ ἀπάντων τὰς ἀρχὰς κληροῦσθαι, ἀλλὰ τὰς βελτίους, καὶ τὰς ἱκανωτάτους, ἐφ' ἑκάστου τοῦ ἔργου προκρίνασθαι. Iſoc. p. 285.

Novemviri antequam aſſumerentur ad Magiſtratum illum de omni retrorſus vita acta cauſam dicere ſolebant, quod ſi nullam dedecoris labem perpetua innocentia contraxiſſe videbantur, ad τὴν ἀρχὴν adſumebantur, deinde ad Areopagiticum Senatum conſcribantur, Solonis lege, *Petitus de Leg. Atticis, p.* 140. Ætatem Senatoriam definitam fuiſſe puto anno tricesimo, *Petit.* 186. Introducebantur autem omnes illi Magiſtratus quorum anteactam vitam expendi, & in eam inquiri oportet, *Pet. p.* 223.

And herein our Gentry and Commonalty have likewiſe manifeſtly greater Advantages and Opportunities for the Promoting of the Work of Reformation, for the making one brave Effort for the Intereſt of Religion and Virtue, for the Honour and Welfare of *England*, and thereby to recover the former Glory of their Anceſtors, who were Famous for their Virtue, and Love to their Country, and which appeared ſo glorious in the Heroes of the Gentile World.

And for the Encouragement of thoſe that are deſtitute of the Advantages of Riches and Honours, of Authority and Learning, to uſe their Diligence and Zeal in the Inſtances I have given, or in any other Expreſſions of their Duty for the Promoting of this Work, * I will put them in mind, that it hath been long obſerved, that the Perſons who have been thought to have performed the braveſt Actions, and done great Service to the World, have frequently been Men of obſcure Birth and Parentage, who were without Riches and Honours, (and often, I conceive, without Learning;) of which a multitude of Inſtances might be given, if 'twas neceſſary here to inſert them. That tho' 'tis freely allowed, that Authority and Quality, when they are accompanied with Virtue, as they ought to be, or when they are the Rewards of it, † which too ſeldom happens, are truly honourable, and

* Non eſt prætereundum maximorum virorum pleroſque patres ignoratos, matres impudicas fuiſſe. Si quis rem conſiderare velit, omnes eos vel ſaltem maximam partem eorum, qui in hoc toto terrarum orbe res præſtantiores aggreſſi ſunt, atq; inter cæteros ævi ſui heroes excelluerunt, aut obſcuro aut abjecto loco editos, & prognatos fuiſſe abjectis parentibus, *&c. Vita Caſtruccii Caſtruciani, p.* 1.

† Alii pro pecunia emunt Nobilitatem, alii illam lenocinio, alii veneficiis, alii parricidiis hanc commeruerunt; multis proditio nobilitatem conciliavit, ſimulatq; divitias peperit, plerique adulatione, detractione, calumniis, Sycophantia. Multos venationes, rapinæ, cædes, præſtigia, & aliæ malæ artes ad Nobilitatem promoverunt, *Agripp. de Nobilit. p.* 348.

enable

enable thoſe that have them to be more ſerviceable to the Intereſt of Religion, and the Good of Mankind, which is their proper Buſineſs; but when they are ſeparated from Virtue, they render thoſe that poſſeſs them truly ſcandalous, and highly pernicious. *'Tis true likewiſe, That when Learning is moderately purſued for the Service of Religion, and Good of the World, it is both innocent and laudable, and the Advantages of it for thoſe ends are confeſt; yet 'tis plain, from too ſad Experience, that 'tis too generally ſought upon baſe Conſiderations, and frequently applied to very ill Purpoſes; as is allow'd, when 'tis made uſe of for the Raiſing of Hereſies, the Adulterating or Confounding the Simplicity of the Chriſtian Doctrine with Philoſophical Notions and Diſtinctions, or to the Raiſing and Continuing of unneceſſary and dangerous Diſputes out of Pride and Vanity, of Paſſion or Worldly Intereſt, to the diſturbing of the Peace of the Church, the Ruine of Charity, and manifeſt Injury of Religion. † But as Virtue may be obtained without great Natural parts, or acquired Knowledge, as is evident by the Lives of the common Body of Chriſtians in the firſt Ages, * and is honourable without any Ornaments from Birth and Honour, Authority or Learning; ſo it makes Men capable of doing much good: Let them conſider not only this; but further, That it pleaſes Almighty God ſometimes, (as we may expreſs it) to raiſe the Spirits of Men above their natural pitch for great Performances, to make uſe of mean and contemptible

* Ut omnium rerum ſic literarum quoque, intemperantia laboremus, *Sen. Ep.* 106.

† Paucis opus eſt literis ad mentem bonam. Illud adjungo ſæpius ad laudem atque virtutem, naturam ſine doctrina, quam ſine natura valuiſſe doctrinam, *Cic. Or. pro Arch. p.* 12.

Surgunt indocti & rapiunt cœlos, & nos cum ſcientia noſtra mergimur in infernum, *Auguſt. ex Agr. de Van. Scs. p.* 7.

* Nobilitas nil aliud ſit quàm cognita virtus, quis in eo quem veteraſcentem videat ad gloriam, generis antiquitatem deſiderat?

Sed genus & proavos & quæ non fecimus ipſi, Vix ea noſtra voco.

Tota licet veteres exornent undique ceræ Atria, Nobilitas ſola eſt atque unica virtus.

Inſtru-

Inſtruments, in Humane Appearance, to bring about the great Ends of his Providence, whereby his Power ſeems to be more viſible, and the Pride of Man to be more humbled; and that among the various Inſtances of this kind, which Sacred and Prophane Hiſtory acquaint us with, he did ſo in the Publiſhing of Chriſtianity, when he *choſe the fooliſh things of the World to confound the wiſe, and the weak things of the World to confound the things which are mighty*; when he commiſſioned a few mean and illiterate Perſons to preach the Goſpel, which notwithſtanding prevailed over the Policy and Learning, the Worldly Intereſt and Prejudice, the Strength and Oppoſition of the World; and that as then *not many Wiſe Men after the Fleſh, not many Mighty, not many Noble were called*; ſo in the Ages ſince, tho' there have been of all Conditions, as well Noble, as Ignoble; Learned, as Illiterate; Kings, and Philoſophers; Emperours, and States-Men, who have been devoted to Religion, have ſhewed the mighty Power and Energy of it, and adorned the Ages in which they have lived; yet it hath been a general Obſervation among Heathens as well as Chriſtians, and 'tis a terrible one for great Men to reflect upon, **That Riches and Honours do in the nature of them tend to corrupt Mens Minds, are great Clogs to Wiſdom, mighty Obſtructions in the Buſineſs of the Chriſtian Warfare to thoſe that poſſeſs them*; and therefore that the Great and the Noble are too generally diverted and carried away from *the One thing needful*, the working out of their own Salvation, and conſequently their being concerned

1 Cor. 1. 27.

1 Cor. 1. 26.

* Luxuriant animi rebus plerunque ſecundis. Prima peregrinos obſcœna pecunia mores Intulit, turpi fregerunt ſecula luxu Divitiæ molles.

Pecuniis augetur improbitas. Divitiæ ſeculi ſunt laquei diaboli. Divitiæ rarò virtutis ſunt comites. Veſtes talares Corpora, opes autem immenſæ animas impediunt. Pietas, probitas, fides, privata bona ſunt.

for

for that of others, by the violent Temptations that their Condition expoſes and ſubjects them to, which Perſons of a lower Rank are much without; wherefore our Saviour hath aſſur'd us how *hard it is for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; out of a ſenſe whereof ſome Chriſtians in moſt, I conceive, if not in all Ages, have refuſed Titles and Honours, and have renounced Riches and Worldly Grandeur; nay, Princes and Potentates, Kings and Queens, have, we are told, forſaken their Crowns, their Fortunes and Territories, for a ſafe and happy Retirement: And it accordingly appears, by the Account that is given of the *Endeavours* that have been ſo ſucceſsful towards a *National Reformation*, That as they were not begun, ſo they have not been aſſiſted by many of the Rich and Mighty, but by Perſons of a lower Rank, who ſubmitted to be reckoned Diſturbers of the publick Peace, Imprudent and Hypocritical Perſons, *&c.* as the Chriſtians of old were by the Heathens, and as ſuch will hardly fail to be who in a corrupt Age ſhall faithfully go about to convince ſome Men of their Lukewarmneſs and neglect of their Duty, and to diſturb the Generality in their Vices, for the effecting a National Reformation; who were willing, I ſay, to bear the Cenſures, the cruel Mockings, and the Frowns of the World, and perhaps ſome of them to hazard their Lives for the Vindicating of the Honour of the Laws of God, the Good of Souls, and the Service of their Country; and that tho it may perhaps be expected from the Character of ſome few of the Great and Noble among us, who ſeem to be much more honourably diſtinguiſh'd from thoſe of their own Rank by their Virtue, than they are from thoſe below them by their Quality, that

Matt. 19. 23, 24.

that they have it in their Inclinations, as it ſeems to be in their Power, with God's Bleſſing, to be Inſtruments of Reforming us from publick Prophaneneſs and Immoralities; yet that 'tis ſtill to be feared, that great Men will not generally at leaſt obtain of themſelves to declare for oppreſſed Virtue, and engage in its Cauſe till it hath regained its Reputation more generally in the World, and it is accounted a Mark of greater Infamy to be vicious.

Prophaneneſs and Debauchery have, in truth, been ever infamous in the Opinions of the wiſe and good Men in all Ages of the World, and treated as ſuch by the Religion and Laws of Heathen Nations, as well as by the Chriſtian Religion, and the Laws of our own Country; which Juſtice and Temperance, Chaſtity and Truth, never were, that I know of, by any; nay, there have never, I conceive, been many Men ſo loſt to the Notions of Good and Evil, as ſeriouſly to ſet a Mark of Infamy upon ſome Men for their Virtue, or to make Panegyricks upon others for their Vices; and neither the Number or the Quality of thoſe that are guilty of Prophaneneſs and Debauchery can any more alter the Nature of them, or can take off them that Infamy that the Law of God, the Laws of Nations, and the Law of Nature have fixt on them, than they can the Nature of Murther, Bribery, or Theft; and as they are infamous in their Nature, they will every day more appear to be ſo, if we continue to make our vigorous Efforts againſt them. It will not be thought creditable for Men of an inferior Rank, to be carried through the Streets before the Magiſtrate, or to be put in the Stocks, to do there publick Penance for the Violation of Divine and Humane

Humane Laws: Or will it be Honourable for Men of Title or Authority, who have thought themſelves unfit for gentile Converſation without a large ſhare of Lewdneſs, have reckoned it Wit to Blaſpheme, and have, within our Memories, 'tis believed, made their way to their Preferments by their Prophaneneſs and Debauchery, to have the Penalties of thoſe Laws levied upon them in the Sight of their Neighbours or their Country; to be upon Record; and to be diſabled for thoſe Offences for Places of Honour, of Publick and Private Truſts; to be told before the Congregation *Four* times a Year by the King, in His *Proclamation*, that He reckons them to be a *Diſcredit to his Kingdom*, and ſtrictly commands their being brought to *Puniſhment*; and by their Miniſter at the ſame time, that they ought to be avoided by Men of Religion, to be excluded from Chriſtian Communion, till they reform, and that they will, unleſs they do ſo, be ſhut out of Heaven, and be condemned to unſpeakable and everlaſting Confuſion and Torment? In ſhort, we may in a little time ſee a Drunkard, a Lewd or a Prophane Perſon, tho' a Man of the greateſt Quality or Eſtate, who now paſſes with too little Remark and Contempt, and is kept in countenance by the Multitude of Offenders of the ſame kind, make but a very ſcurvy Figure, be aſhamed to ſhew himſelf in any Company but of ſuch as are like himſelf, abandoned of a ſenſe of true Honour as well as Religion, and ſhunned by all but the unclean Herd of the Vicious and Prophane, who may ere long be aſhamed of one another in the Sight of the Sun, and may be forced to converſe, or rather to have their gangs as High-way-Men, Clippers and Coiners have, in dark Corners, and

in

in continual fear of being discovered. This is but part of the glorious Prospect that we have in view, whilst we continue to make our vigorous Efforts against Vice and Prophaneness: And is there any doubt whether they that acquit themselves in this Noble Enterprize as they ought, will entitle themselves to great Acknowledgments from the present Age, and from Posterity, since the Influence of their good Example, and the happy Effects of their pious Endeavours may last to succeeding Ages, as long as the Nation, and perhaps the World will last?

Let then the Men of the World, whose Hopes terminate with this Life, pursue Honours and Titles, and what in their foolish Language they call their Worldly Advantages: Let them that think of no other Happiness, court popular Air, intrigue and fawn, drudge and scramble for little Parcels of Earth, which if they meet with are their Portion, attended * with Fear and Envy, Jealousie and Hatred, Anxiety and Grief, which are their secret and almost constant Tormentors, and make them, as the Scripture expresses it, as *the troubled Sea that cannot rest:* But let those that can look on these deluded and miserable Souls with a just Pity; that know the Pleasures of In-

* O si pectora patent divitum quantos intus sublimis agit fortuna metus? Brutio coro pulsante fretum mitior unda est.

Invidiâ. Siculi non invenere Tyranni Tormentum majus.

Quem mihi regem dabis non curis plenum; non diadema aspicias, sed vitam afflictione refertam, non catervas satellitum, sed curarum multitudinem.

Antigonus rex cuidam anui ipsum beatum prædicanti dixisse fertur, Si scires, ô mater, quam multorum malorum hic pannus scit (diadema autem ostendebat) eum in stercore jacentem non tolleres.

Cur tu hos evasisse putes, quos diri conscia facti Mens habet attonitos & surdo verbere cædet Occulto quatiente animo tortore flagellum?

Non enim gazæ neque consularis summovet lictor miseros tumultus mentis, & curas laqueata circum tecta volantes.

nocence; that are acquainted with the Triumphs of Conſcience that ariſe from the ſenſe of their having ſerved their God, their Country, and themſelves; that hope, after a few Years, for an Everlaſting Inheritance, and unſpeakable Joy at God's Right hand; that believe that our Bleſſed
1 Joh. 3. 8. Saviour *Chriſt Jeſus was manifeſted that he might deſtroy the Works of the Devil*, think it more honourable to be employed in the Promoting the ſame Glorious Deſign to the utmoſt of their Power, and by all Chriſtian Methods, according to their Abilities and Opportunities, than to be Favourites of the greateſt Prince, than to be Maſters of the World. We ſhall indeed meet with many Diſcouragements, and much Reſiſtance in theſe Endeavours. The Reformation of a Nation, particularly that is ſo very degenerate, that a great part of it ſeems to act as if it had enter'd into a Combination againſt Religion, cannot be thought to be an eaſie Work; we never, I ſuppoſe, heard of ſuch a one in any Age that was effected without Oppoſition. The firſt Attempts, eſpecially of a National Reformation, unleſs they have the Advantages of Power, of Intereſt, or of Numbers of Men to ſupport them, muſt (humanly ſpeaking) be attended with great Difficulties; thoſe that are engaged in them may expect to wreſtle not only againſt the Paſſions and
Eph. 6. 12. Luſts of private Men, but againſt *Principalities* and *Powers*, againſt the Strength and Policy of the Prince, as well as Men of this World, ſince thoſe that moſt need Reformation will moſt explode the Attempts of it, and oppoſe it; and among them there will be ſuch met with as by their Quality or Intereſt, their Power or their Authority, may be moſt capable to obſtruct it; and there will

will be others, who, when they have not Power, or they dare not publickly oppoſe the Undertaking, will be ſpreading their Jealouſies, that ſome ſecular Intereſt or dangerous Deſign is carrying on under ſuch plauſible Pretences, and will uſe their utmoſt Diligence to find fault with the Manner (how regular ſoever it be) of its being carried on, or to raiſe Objections againſt the Perſons engaged in it; and when they cannot find any real ones, they will have recourſe to their Inventions, to down-right Slanders, to miſ-repreſent them, as the Heathen Perſecutors did the Martyrs, to expoſe them the more to the Peoples Hatred and Rage; nay, and that which makes the Work yet the more difficult is, that there will not be wanting another kind of Men, and indeed, I conceive, ſome of the worſt ſort of Enemies to ſuch a Deſign, who, through ſome unhappy Principles or Prejudices, will not only be content to ſit ſtill themſelves, and to be unconcerned in this Matter, but perhaps to excuſe themſelves from giving that Aſſiſtance which might be otherwiſe with Modeſty expected from them; and to prevent the Cenſure that may be apt to fall upon them for their ill Conduct, will be very ready to declare the Attempts of this kind impracticable, unſeaſonable, or imprudent, as they do moſt other things of the ſame nature; which, 'tis much to be both feared and lamented, many of them want either Zeal, or perhaps Honeſty to undertake, which Men of no leſs true Wiſdom, (if that Principle, whether it be called Caution or Policy, that keeps Men from doing their Duty, deſerves the Name of Folly, rather than Wiſdom) not only attempt, but ſurmount the appearing Difficulties of. But tho' Reſiſtance to the firſt

Attempts of Reformation from the Powers of Darkneſs and the corrupt Nature of Man might be foreſeen, and may have been experienced by thoſe concerned in the Tranſactions I have given an Account of, and may be ſtill expected in ſome meaſure in the Proſecution of it; yet as 'twas at firſt neceſſary to undertake it, ſo 'tis ſtill as neceſſary to purſue it: Nay, the higher the Tide of Debauchery and Prophaneneſs runs, the more evident Reaſon there is for us to look to our Banks, to uſe all proper Methods for the Oppoſing of it, and the more generous and brave is the Oppoſition, unleſs 'tis more reaſonable to give way to it, and expect an Inundation of Wickedneſs and Ruine, than to endeavour to prevent it, ſince as the Caſe will grow the worſe, and more deſperate by the delay, ſo the Objections that are now made againſt it will thereby grow the ſtronger.

Let then the Oppoſition to this Enterprize be as great and deſperate, and from as various Cauſes as we can well ſuppoſe it; if thoſe who are engaged in it do ſincerely propoſe God's Glory and the Good of Mankind in their Endeavours; if they often turn their Thoughts within themſelves, as well as upon the Faults of others, and endea-

Phil. 2. 15. vour *to be blameleſs and harmleſs, and without Rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe Nation*; if they take great Care that their Conduct in this Affair be regular, governed by the Laws of the Land, and the Precepts of their Religion, remembring that the Goodneſs of no end can make Evil means lawful, and as free as far as 'tis poſſible from Imprudences and Inadvertencies, to which the wiſeſt and beſt Men are ſubject, (and therefore are no reaſonable Objection againſt a good

Deſign

Deſign to honeſt Men, that know how to give all juſt Allowances to Humane Frailties in a Work of Difficulty, wherein many unexpected Occurrences will ariſe, Numbers of Men are engaged, and who will be ſometimes taken unprepar'd and at diſadvantage by bad and deſigning Men, who will not fail to wait for their Halting, and to improve all kind of Advantages againſt them;) if they go on with Diligence and Reſolution, conſidering that *Solomon*'s Direction, *Whatever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy Might*, in this Work ſeems more eſpecially to be regarded by thoſe who are employed in it, a Curſe being pronounced againſt them that *do the Work of the Lord* || *deceitfully*, and a Crown of Life being promiſed to them * *that are faithful to Death*; if, laſtly, they cry mightily to God, to whoſe Omnipotence no Difficulties are inſuperable, and without whom nothing is ſtrong, no Means can attain their end for his gracious Direction and merciful Aſſiſtance in a Work of Hazard and Difficulty, wherein Wiſdom and Conſtancy, the Spiritual Armour of the Goſpel, is requiſite, the Honour and Intereſt of Religion and the Good of Souls ſeem to be ſo much concern'd, to prevent their being aſſaulted with ſuch violent Temptations that might overcome them, or to give them ſuch extraordinary Supports and Comforts as may enable them to bear up under them; and they humbly depend more upon his Direction and Bleſſing than their own Diligence and Conduct, conſidering that the Zeal we have for God's Honour, and the Succeſs of it is from Him; that our beſt Endeavours herein, as well as our other Performances, will have a great mixture of Humane Frailty; and that after *all we ſhall do we ſhall be but unprofitable Servants.*

Eccl. 9. 10.

Jer. 48 10:

|| Or, *negligently*, as in Marg.

* Rev. 2. 10.

Luk 17. 10.

vants. If they thus go on with Sincerity, with Prudence, with Courage, with Humility, and truſt in God, they may, I think, face all the World, we may ſoon ſee what Courage Vice hath, whether Prophaneneſs and Debauchery will be able to hold up their heads with their Supporters, (which they have too long had within our Memory) as Religion hath often done without them, and when the Powers of the World have been againſt it. No, Sin is of the Nature of the Devil, its Author, cowardly and ſneaking, and will, with God's Bleſſing, give way when thus oppoſed, which thoſe concerned in the Tranſactions I have given an Account of, have, I ſuppoſe, abundantly experimented, and who have had ſo great Succeſs, as makes it very evident that a general Concurrence of good Men may effect a general Reformation; but if the Concurrence of Men of Religion ſhould not prove ſo univerſal as is hoped it will, or if our Endeavours ſhould not ſucceed to a National Reformation, as is propoſed, we may however hope to do a great deal of good; we ſhall bear our Teſtimony to Religion againſt the Corruptions of the Age, and we cannot, I think, fail of giving a great Check to publick Wickedneſs; and tho' we ſhould not after all, by our Prayers and Endeavours, prevent the Deluge of Calamities that threaten us, an Ark may mercifully be provided for us, we may deliver our own Souls, and it will then be known who they are that are to be thanked that a thorough Reformation was not effected, and the Miſery of the Nation prevented; not only thoſe who by deſperately diſcouraging and oppoſing pious and proper Endeavours for Promoting a Reformation, ſeem to be of the Number of thoſe that may be

ſaid,

ſaid, in ſome ſenſe, *to fight againſt God*; but thoſe Act. 5. 39.
likewiſe that deſpiſed the Warnings we gave them of their Danger, all the Perſwaſions with which we preſſed them to ſet about it, and would not be prevailed with to give any hearty Aſſiſtance to the Work. Suppoſing then, as hath been ſaid, that we are to prepare, in the Proſecution of this Enterprize, for evil Surmiſings and reproachful Words; for Storms of Malice and ill Will, which the Enemy of all Goodneſs and the Paſſions of Men may be expected to raiſe, this, I conceive, may, now the Tide is turning, be generally the greateſt Oppoſition of the infatuated and ſenſeleſs Slaves of Vice; for in Reverence to our common Nature I muſt preſume, that there are but few that will be declared Agents for the Devil, that are ſo abandoned of all Senſe of Honour, all Concern for their Reputation, as to enter publickly the Liſts, and venture their Lives for his Service. And as wicked Men have therein the worſt Cauſe, they have not, I think, ſettled and ſteady Principles to act upon, but little true Courage, and not much Faith among them; they will often betray one another when Occaſion offers, and therefore we may conclude that they will never make a firm ſtand againſt the united Body of good Men if they acquit themſelves as they ought in ſo glorious an Undertaking.

To the Men of Religion and Virtue of all Ranks, Orders, and Denominations, without diſtinction, I ask leave therefore, in this common Cauſe of Religion, humbly to apply my ſelf. Your Religion is avowedly attacqued by the deſperate Rebels of Chriſtianity, and Enemies to Virtue; your God is publickly diſhonoured, yea ſometimes,

'tis ſtill to be feared, Blaſphemed, for the Entertainment of Perſons of all Degrees, all Ages, and both Sexes; His Laws are trampled on; His Servants deſpis'd; the Notions of Good and Evil are endeavoured to be confounded, and your Country is in imminent Danger of being loſt, if in the preſent Conteſt between Religion and Debauchery, Religion does not prevail. You are all confeſſedly, by your Baptiſmal Engagement, liſted Soldiers for God's Service, againſt the Devil's Kingdom. And as God hath an undoubted Title to your Service, the King, by publickly declaring for a vigorous Execution of the Laws againſt publick Wickedneſs, and the Cauſe of Religion, hath given you an happy Opportunity of diſcharging your Fidelity and Zeal for your Great Lord and Maſter; and your Fellow-Chriſtians, who are already ſucceſsfully engaged in a publick Oppoſition to Vice and Prophaneneſs, to theſe Rebels to Religion, and Enemies to your Country, ſeem to call on you to enter into their pious Confederacy, as *Moſes* heretofore did on the *Iſraelites*, when he ſtood in the Gate of the Camp; *Who is on the Lord's ſide, let him come unto me?* Or as Holy *David* of old, *Who will riſe up for me againſt the Evil doers? Who will ſtand up for me againſt the Workers of Iniquity?* Now then is the Time to make one general and brave Effort for the Intereſt of Religion, and for the Welfare of the *Engliſh* Nation. And will you any longer defer your Declaring and Engaging in this Glorious Work, now it ſeems ſo apparent that this Cloud that appeared ſo little to you at firſt is like to overſpread our whole Horizon; that one of the moſt plauſible and uncomfortable Objections which was made to this Undertaking, of its being impra-

Exod. 32. 20.

Pſal 94. 16

impracticable, which we have too much reaſon to ſuſpect to be upon this, as well as upon other like Occaſions, an Excuſe for Fear, Lazineſs, or want of good Principles, is taken off, by the great Succeſs that hath attended it; that the Heat of the Day, the fierceſt Oppoſition to theſe Attempts, ſeems much over; and that you have ſo very great reaſon to conclude, that the Virtuous part of the Nation, of all Parties, will fall in and give their Aſſiſtance in it, when more particular Methods ſhall be laid (as they will ſoon be) before them; that if we point our united Batteries againſt the ſtrong holds of Debauchery and Prophaneneſs; if we proſecute this Religious War with Conduct and Reſolution, which is ſo ſucceſsfully begun with ſo unequal a humane force, we have Victory in view, we may, with God's Bleſſing, ſee a Reformation throughly effected, and put upon ſuch a firm Foundation, as that it may not be eaſily in the Power of a vicious Court, or of a degenerate Nobility or Gentry, in a ſucceeding Reign to overturn it, again to debauch the Nation, and bring it in ſuch danger of Ruine. But is it not enough that you that have had an early Knowledge of theſe Tranſactions, have not ſooner engaged in a Cauſe which you could not well be ſuppoſed, without great Inconſideration or Prejudice, but ſecretly to approve of under all its Diſadvantages, when it was in it ſelf the ſame as it is now with its Succeſs, and meerly perhaps becauſe you thought the Service might be too hot for you, and therefore you left it to others to engage in an Oppoſition to Vice whilſt it was Triumphant, to fall upon it in its Intrenchments, to bear the brunt of the Battle, and reſerved your ſelves for leſs doubtful and dangerous Service, till the main

main Body of the Nation ſhould come up, and Victory ſhould be turning on the ſide of Virtue? Cowardice in this Caſe, as in War, may be almoſt as miſchievous and as criminal as Treachery. Where is then your Zeal for God, or Charity for Man, if you appear ſtill ſo unconcerned whether Religion or Prophaneneſs prevails; if after *Ten* Years are paſt of a Reign in which we had reaſon to promiſe our ſelves a Reformation would be carried on, and be the Glory of it, you ſtill frame further Excuſes to poſtpone it, and ſuch weak ones as will very hardly paſs with a mortal Man, who underſtands what indiſpenſible Obligations Religion lays upon us, heartily to ſet about it; but ſurely not with the living God, that *ſees not as Man ſees, but ſearches the Heart?* Do you think this Nation hath not bled and ſuffered enough for our inexcuſable Delays, our deferring this neceſſary Work? How can you reconcile your Neutrality to the Promiſes which many of you may be ſuppoſed to have made in the late Days of our outward Humiliation? or the Prayers that moſt of you put up to God for a National Reformation? How is it conſiſtent with the Pretenſions you make of your being of the pureſt Religion, or of the beſt conſtituted Church? What do you think of that Declaration of your Bleſſed Saviour, *He that is not with me is againſt me?* Can you perſwade your ſelves that your continuing your Neutrality till the Victory is either ſo gained on the ſide of Religion, that there will be little need of your Aſſiſtance; or that the Intereſts of Religion are depreſſed, and your Country ruined, (which there is ſuch Danger of) beyond the Example of former Ages, deſerves either the Name of Bravery,

Matt. 12. 30.

or

or *the Wiſdom that is from Above?* * Difficulties and Sufferings are ſurely the proper Exerciſes of Chriſtians, are as it were the Teſt and Touch-ſtone of Noble Minds; and therefore the Perſons who in all Ages have been eſteemed the Wiſeſt and Braveſt, and to have deſerved beſt of Mankind, have been thoſe, who for the Vindication of Truth, the Cauſe of Religion, and the Service of their Country, have cheerfully undergone Ignominy, Baniſhment, and Death, through the Malignity of the Times, popular Fury, or the Tyranny of Governments; † inſomuch, that the moſt celebrated Heathen Moraliſts and Philoſophers declared, That *a Man could hardly be ſuppoſed to be Virtuous without Suffering for being ſo.* And one of them could, we are told, bravely expreſs himſelf to this purpoſe: If a Man can ſee a Sword at his Eyes without winking; if he can make it an indifferent matter to him, whether his Life goes out of his Throat, or at his Mouth; if he can hear himſelf ſentenced to Baniſhment, or Torments, and can ſay, *All this I am provided for*; this is the Temper of Mind that makes him happy. Accordingly

* Athletam ſtadium, Nauclerum tempeſtas, ducem pugna, magnanimum calamitas, Chriſtianum verò tentatio probat & exanimat. Calamitas virtutis eſt occaſio. Ad omne pulchrum vir bonus ſine ulla cunctatione procurrit; ſtet illic carnifex, ſtet tortor, atq; ignis perſeverabit; non quid paſſurus, ſed quid facturus ſit adſpiciet, *Sen. de Vita Beat.*

† Nondum felix es ſi te nondum turba deridet.

Nihil, mihi videtur, infelicius eo cui nihil unquam evenit adverſi, non licuit illi ſe experiri. Tranſiſti ſine Adverſario vitam, nemo ſciet quid potueris: nè tu quidem ipſe.

Magnum exemplum niſi mala fortuna non invenit.

Mutium ignis, Fabritium paupertas, Regulum tormenta, Socratem venenum ſuperare non potuit. Cicuta magnum Socratem fecit, *Sen. Ep.*

Non enim hilaritate, nec laſcivia, nec riſu, aut joco comite levitatis, ſed ſæpe etiam triſtes firmitate & conſtantiâ ſunt beati, *Cicero de fin. lib. 2. p. 58.*

Ἐρήσει δὲ τάδε, ὅτι ὅπῃ διακείμενος ὁ δίκαιος μαστιγώσεται, στρεβλώσεται, δεδήσεται, ἐκκαυθήσεται, τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ τελευτῶν, πάντα κακὰ παθὼν, ἀναξυνδλωθήσεται, Plat. de Rep. lib. 2. p. 361.

cordingly *Socrates* obtained ſo great Fame for his Suffering Death with Conſtancy for his Religion. *Ariſtides* his Juſtice, and *Rutilius* his Integrity and Courage, were more ſignalized by their Baniſhment. But not to ſend Chriſtians to learn Conſtancy in Suffering for a good Cauſe to Heathens, among whom it was, in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, a common Saying, * *That the Chriſtians only were Deſpiſers of Death.* So that *Origen* could, it ſeems, boldly tell them, *We can as cheerfully lay down our Lives for our Religion, as the hardieſt Philoſopher of you can lay down his Coat.* Did the Martyrs and Confeſſours count it ſo great an Honour and Happineſs to ſuffer Bonds and Impriſonment, Exile, and all kinds of Death; to be Rackt, Burnt, Stoned, Boiled; to be thrown to wild Beaſts, and condemned to the Mines, for the Honour of their Lord and Maſter, and the Salvation of their own Souls; laught at all the Methods of Cruelty, and tired out the Malice of their Perſecutors? And by theſe means, as the *Roman* Emperour and Philoſopher, *Marcus Antoninus*, is ſaid to have told the common Aſſembly at *Epheſus*, in his Letter to them, to ſtop the blind Rage of the *Pagan* Prieſts and People againſt them, *They were always Conquerours.* Could ſuch vaſt Numbers of Perſons, of both Sexes, of all Ages, and ſuch various Conditions, more greedily court Martyrdom, than Men did in after-Ages ſeek Biſhopricks and Preferments in the Church, and valued it more than Crowns and Scepters? inſomuch, that it was thought fit to diſcourage and reſtrain their Expoſing themſelves unneceſſarily to it. And can the Diſciples of the ſame Crucify'd Saviour, who are obliged by him *to bear the Croſs*, are bid to *rejoice and be exceeding glad when they are Reviled and*

* Soli Chriſtiani mortis contemptores.

Sanguis Martyrum ſemen Eccleſiæ.

Luk. 14. 27.

Mat. 5. 11.

and Persecuted for his Sake; and are directed by the Apostle, *to count it all Joy when they fall into divers Temptations*, be affrighted at all Appearances of Suffering in a good Cause, think the danger only of meeting with Shame, or other little Inconveniencies, a sufficient Excuse for their not appearing for the Honour of their Lord and Master, and the Saving of their Country? Nay, Can the Soldier endure all the Fatigues, and venture all the Hazards of War, make his way through Blood and Bullets, Fire and Water, upon no higher Motives generally, 'tis to be feared, than for larger Pay, or a greater Post of Honour in an Army; to be talkt of by those that have no more Reason than himself, or use it to as little purpose? Can the Courtier, in a corrupt Reign, intrigue and plod, lye and fawn, lose his Rest, and waste his Spirits, endure the Frowns of Men, and the Reproaches of his own Conscience, to please an Earthly Prince, that is composed of the same Elements with himself? Can the Covetous Man drudge and sweat, pinch Nature, and harass it, live Poorly and Contemptibly, for the miserable Consideration of filling his Chests full of polished Earth, or leaving it for a Son who often takes almost as much Pains to damn his Soul in Spending it, as his Father might his, without Repentance, by his unjustifiable Methods of Getting it? Can the Sons of Wine and Lust be content to brute their Minds, and ruine their Bodies; bear the Cries of ruined Tradesmen, and of their miserable Families; to transmit Poverty and Disease, Infamy and Misery to their Posterity; to watch and fear; to rot and roar for their unlawful and beastly Pleasures? Can the Libertine, when his Conscience will not suffer him to be easie in his Sins; Jam. 1. 2.

Sins; when he wiſhes there was no Religion in this World, nor future Account in the next, be indefatigable in raking out of the Heathen Authors, and our modern Plays, all Expreſſions that may ſeem to favour his Licentiouſneſs, and may help to beget or ſtrengthen his Infidelity; in ſhort, take more pains to ſilence and ſtupifie his Conſcience than might, with God's Bleſſing, be ſufficient, if it were well applied, to ſubdue his vicious Habits, to be wiſe and to be happy? Can theſe Men be thus reſolute, diligent and daring in the purſuit of their Sins, or the empty things of this World, that neither Frowns nor Favours, Hazards nor Difficulties, do make any ſuch Impreſſions upon them, as either to deter or allure them from the Proſecution of their Deſigns, or from *Treaſuring up to themſelves Wrath againſt the Day of Wrath*, from being irrecoverably, unſpeakably and eternally miſerable? And ſhall the Proſelytes of Religion, that know its ineſtimable Value, be ſo faint-hearted and ſneaking in its glorious Cauſe, and in the diſcharge of their Duty, for the obtaining an Everlaſting Happineſs, that every little Difficulty, the Favour or the Frowns of its open Enemies, ſhall diſcourage and keep them from giving their Aſſiſtance in its Defence? This, one would think, all Men that are ſincerely concerned for the Honour and Intereſt of Religion, and expect to receive the unſpeakable Rewards it propoſes to thoſe that faithfully purſue it, will be aſhamed of. I confeſs to the World, I dare not, I know not how to hope to be rewarded with Everlaſting Honour and Happineſs hereafter from him, who in the Purchaſing of our Redemption *endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the Shame*, if I can't prevail upon my ſelf to ſuffer ill Treatment;

Rom. 2. 5.

Heb. 12 2.

to

to be calumniated, laugh'd at, and contemn'd, in Obedience to his Commands, and for the Good of Souls, *for whom He died:* Nay, I will not ask Pardon of the prophane Crew, the Generation of Scorners, that I tell them yet more plainly, that I hope I had rather bear all the Contempt that their Tongues and Pens can fling upon me for any Assistance I am enabled, by God's Grace, to give this Cause I am representing, (whilst I continue under the same Sentiments of it) which I do expect a share of, and am preparing my self to welcome; nay, to suffer Death, if I am called to it, in the Discharge of my Duty therein, rather than bear the Reproaches of my own Mind in this World for an Unconcernedness for it, and much more than to be disowned by my Blessed Saviour at the great Day of Recompence, and to endure his Everlasting Displeasure. And without the leave of those unhappy Wretches who would pass for Wits in these Days, by saying such things as have in all Ages mark'd those that have been guilty of them with the most infamous Characters, and have made them look'd on as Enemies of Mankind, even Monsters in Humane Nature; those Panders for Hell I mean who turn the most serious and sacred things into Jest and Railery, and who will not therefore, I suppose, fail to treat with Scorn and Reproach the present Endeavours of Reformation, and those that are concerned in them: I must remember them, that the Scripture not only tells us, that *in the last Days Scoffers shall appear*, and that *Judgments are prepared for Scorners*, but, particularly, that *God scorneth the Scorners*. And as for those that herd among these prophane Scoffers, these professed Advocates for the Devil's Service, that neglect their

2 Pet. 3. 3. Prov. 19. 29. Prov. 3. 34.

their Duty, and ſacrifice their Conſciences, only to avoid their Scorn and Contumelies, let me deſire them to conſider, whether they have not Reaſon to fear, that God will treat them with Everlaſting Contempt who for his ſake, or in Obedience to his plain Commands, refuſe to be contemned.

Let us not then, Fellow-Chriſtians, who would be accounted faithful Soldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, *be afraid of the Reproach and Revilings* of ſuch prophane and profligate Wretches, but let us rejoice in them, and in any other Perſecution which we may undergo in ſo glorious a Cauſe. Let us conſider, that this Life is the proper Seaſon for Service and Suffering, and the next of Reward and Happineſs. † Let the Lives and Deaths of the Martyrs and Confeſſors of old be much in our Minds. Let us remember, that the beſt Chriſtians in all Ages have been derided and contemned; that our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf, the Captain of our Salvation, who * *was rejected and deſpiſed of Men*, hath commanded us † *not to be afraid of them that kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do; but to fear him that hath Power to caſt into Hell*; and hath ſaid, that ‖ *whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of him, and of his Words, of him alſo ſhall he be aſhamed when he cometh in the Glory of his Father with the holy Angels*; but that ‡ *if we are Reviled and Perſecuted for his Sake our Reward ſhall be great in Heaven.* Let us fortifie our ſelves with theſe Conſiderations againſt the moſt violent Oppoſition of the Enemies of Goodneſs, and the dangerous Suggeſtions and ill Examples of formal and lukewarm Chriſtians, and of thoſe who are

Iſa. 51. 7.

† Unumquodque habet propoſitum Principes ſuos. Romani duces imitentur Camillos, Fabritios, Scipiones: Philoſophi proponant Socratem, Platonem, Ariſtot. &c. Nos autem habeamus propoſiti noſtri principes, Paulos, Hilariones, &c.

Aliquis vir bonus nobis ante oculos habendus eſt, elige itaque Catonem, elige Lælium, &c. *Sen Ep.* 11. *p.* 180.

* Iſa. 53. 3 † Luke 12. 5. ‖ Mar. 8. 38. ‡ Matt. 5. 11.

too

too often falſly called Friends; let us look on all their Inſinuations, and any Objections whatſoever to the Diſcharge of our Duty in this Undertaking, which we may meet with from the Prudent and the Wary, tending to diſcourage us from the hearty Proſecution of it, as Temptations that we are to reſiſt, unleſs they can convince us that we do not act herein as becomes Men and Chriſtians, and good Members of the Community; that this Work is not honourable in it ſelf, deſirable in its Effects, and acceptable to Almighty God, which, I think, they will never do, ſince they cannot, I conceive, prove, that the Civil Government ought not to indeavour to puniſh and ſuppreſs publick Sins, and the open Defiance of Religion, in anſwer to Scripture, clear Reaſon, and the general Conſent of Mankind to the contrary.

Laſtly therefore, *Let all thoſe who are already ſincerely concerned in this Noble Undertaking*, and all others that have any Love to God, any Charity to Man, any Concern for their Country, or Regard to their Poſterity, to engage them in it, conſider, that we have herein the Laws of God and of the Nation, the Commands of the King, the Concurrence of a late Repreſentative Body of the Nation, the Prayers of good Men, the Pretences of thoſe that carry but a Form and Profeſſion of Religion, and the Conſciences that are not hardned, even of bad Men, on our ſide, and moreover, the great Succeſs that hath already attended theſe Attempts, to animate and encourage our Zeal and Diligence in it; ſo that if we acquit our ſelves herein like Men and Chriſtians; if God is on our ſide, we know, *there is* (as *Solomon* ſays) *no Wiſdom, nor Underſtanding, nor Counſel againſt Him*; we need not much fear the Strength or Policy of the Prov. 21. 30.

World, or the Powers of Darkneſs; we may, with God's Bleſſing, ſee Prophaneneſs and Debauchery every day more and more fly into dark Corners, as Idolatry of old did at the appearance of Chriſtianity, Vice be branded and confounded, Virtue be embraced, Religion prevail, *England* flouriſh, and give ſuch an Example as may provoke ſucceeding Ages and other Nations to an Imitation, and give perhaps Occaſion to reform Chriſtendom and Mankind. But what Triumph of Soul, which neither Riches, nor Honours, nor the Fleſh can give, ſuch happy Souls may, Living or Dying have, who have undergone Shame and Sufferings in the faithful Diſcharge of their Duty, and for the Cauſe of God, who have been his Inſtruments in bringing about ſuch bleſſed Effects, nay, in diſcharging their Duty herein and in other reſpects ſincerely, tho' Succeſs, which is not in our Power, and will not be required of us, ſhould not attend it? And, on the contrary, what ſevere Reflections they may hereafter make on their Behaviour, who, after this Matter is plainly laid before them, and a publick Reformation of Manners ſeems to be put as it were into their hands, will either openly oppoſe, or ſecretly undermine the juſt Endeavours of it, or that will not be prevail'd upon either to concur in the Methods that are already laid, or to engage in any other that they can ſuppoſe may be more effectual for the carrying on a National Reformation; that can contentedly look on and ſee their Fellow-Chriſtians ſuffer in any kind, by their brave Oppoſition to the declared Enemies of God, and the Devil's Kingdom, the Cauſe of Religion to be injured and depreſſed, and their Country ſo much endangered, for want of their giving their ſeaſonable and zealous Aſſiſtance to it, I will not undertake to deſcribe.

I will

I will only add, That if the *Attempts* of *Reformation*, which were began with ſo great Diſadvantage, have born up under ſo many Difficulties, which are carried on by the united Endeavours of ſuch Bodies of Men, in the ſeveral Parts of this City, are ſpreading through the Cities and Corporations of the Kingdom, and are propagating in thoſe of *Ireland*, who have a Communication with one another, are governed by Methods that have been approved by Perſons of great Wiſdom and conſummated Judgment, and which have been ſo highly ſucceſsful, ſhould be defeated by the Induſtry and Power, the Number and Intereſt of its Enemies: If, I ſay, we ſhould ſuffer Debauchery and Prophaneneſs to regain their ground, and to carry the Victory, after the Advances that are thus made towards the Suppreſſing of them, and the Encouragements and Advantages we have for the Carrying of them on to ſo glorious an Iſſue, have we not very great Reaſon to fear, that we may never again have ſuch an Opportunity put into our Hands? Can it be thought eaſie, humanly ſpeaking, to bring the Bodies of Men together that are now engaged in it, to rally and reaſſume a baffled Cauſe, wherein they may perhaps be apt to think they may have made a full and diſmal Experiment of the deſperate Averſion and Oppoſition of this Generation to Reformation, have, if they have acted therein, and in other parts of their Duty, ſincerely, kept the Guilt of publick Wickedneſs from lying on them, and may have delivered their own Souls? Or is there any probability that this Cauſe will be revived and ſucceſsfully retrieved by thoſe, whom no Arguments will now prevail on to concur in the preſent Methods, or to give any other zealous Aſſiſtance to

it? And who is there that believes that there is a Righteous God that governs the World, that will not fear, how ſanguine ſoever ſome Men may be upon the firmneſs of our preſent Peace and Settlement, that notwithſtanding our Councils and Confederacies, we ſhall feel the Effects of the high Diſpleaſure of Almighty God, upon whoſe Bleſſing the Stability of our preſent Peace and outward Proſperity does depend; that *He will be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?* And if this ſhould prove to be our diſmal Caſe, might it not then be ſaid over us; O ungrateful and rebellious Nation, that wouldeſt ſo provoke infinite Patience and Forbearance, wouldeſt obſtinately refuſe ſo many gracious Offers, contemn ſuch various Methods of Mercy, as if thou had'ſt been deſperately reſolved upon Deſtruction! O *England! England!* To what Miſery have thy Sins brought thee! But the Cauſe of Reformation is God's Cauſe, His Providence hath ſeemed to me to favour the poor Endeavours of it, which are repreſented in theſe Papers, and therefore I hope they will, with his Bleſſing, ſo proſper and prevail, that ſuch a National Reformation may be effected as may prevent His heavy Judgments falling upon us.

Jer. 5. 9.

And may Almighty God, who is pleaſed to magnifie his Power in Weakneſs, for this End mercifully direct and ſupport thoſe who are ſincerely engaged in this Glorious Work, give what is ſaid herein agreeable to his Will ſome Succeſs in the furthering of it, and graciouſly pardon any thing in it that may not be acceptable to Him, for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt's Sake.

All Glory to GOD.

For the more Effectual Promoting the Design of this Book, here is added, an *Abstract* of the *Penal-Laws* against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*.

Also His Majesty's Gracious and Pious *Proclamation*, pursuant to the Humble *Address* of the Honourable House of Commons, for the Vigorous Execution of those Laws; and the late *Act of Parliament* against *Prophane Swearing* and *Cursing* at length, useful for Ministers, who are to read them *Four* times a Year in their respective *Churches* and *Chappels* throughout the Kingdom.

OFFENCES.	*Laws and Statutes.*	*PENALTIES.*
Prophanation of the Lord's-Day.		
ALL Laws in force concerning the Observation of the Lord's-Day, shall be put in Execution: This Day is by every one to be Sanctified and kept Holy; and all Persons must be careful herein to exercise themselves in the Duties of Piety and true Religion, Publickly and Privately; and every one on this Day (not having a reasonable Excuse) must diligently resort to some Publick place, where the Service of God is exercised, or must be present at some other Place, (allowed of by Law) in the Practice of some Religious Duty, either of Prayer, Preaching, Reading, or Expounding of the Scriptures, or Conference upon the same.	29 *Car.* 2. *Cap.* 7. 1 *W.* & *M.* *Cap.* 18. 1 *Eliz.* *c.* 2. 3 *Jac.* *c.* 4.	NOTE, That His Majesty's Protestant Subjects dissenting from the Church of *England*, and qualified according to the late Statute of Indulgence, are exempted from the Penalties of the Statutes, 3 *Jac.* 1 *Eliz.* 23. *Eliz.* 29. *Eliz.* *and some other Statutes.* But this Indulgence extends not to such prophane Persons who no where attend on the Publick Worship of God Establisht, or allow'd by Law; nor to any that in Preaching or Writing deny the Trinity.

OFFENCES.	Laws and Statutes.	PENALTIES.
Such as Repair not to Church, &c. on *Sundays* and *Holidays*, One Witneſs,	1 *Eliz.* c. 2.	Twelve Pence for every Default, to be levied by Diſtreſs; and for want of Diſtreſs, to be committed to ſome Priſon, until the ſame be paid. *Vid.* 14, 15. §.
Abſenting for a Month, If a Twelve-month or more,	23 *Eliz.* *cap.* 1.	Twenty Pounds *per* Month, or forfeiture of Two parts in Three of their Eſtates.
If any come not to the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper once a Year,	3 *Jac.* c. 4.	Their Names and Sirnames to be Preſented: Forty Shillings Reward to ſuch as preſent them.
None ſhall ſpeak or do any thing in Contempt of the moſt Holy Sacrament.	1 *Ed.* 6. c. 1.	By Oath of Two Lawful Witneſſes, by Three Juſtices, *Quorum un.* to be Bound over and Proſecuted to Seſſions.
Whoſoever ſhall diſturb the Church or Congregation permitted, or miſuſe the Teacher, Proof by Two Witneſſes before a Juſtice of Peace.	1 *W.* & *M.* *cap.* 18. 1 *M.* *cap.* 3.	To find Sureties in 50 *l.* or committed till next Quarter-Seſſions, and on Conviction to Forfeit 20 *l.*
Whoſoever ſhall diſturb any Preacher allow'd in his open Sermon or Collation, or be procuring or abetting thereunto, or ſhall Reſcue, &c. any Offender, &c. Accuſation muſt be by Two Witneſſes, or Confeſſion.		To be Committed by any Juſtice of the County to ſafe Cuſtody, and within ſix days the ſaid Committing Juſtice, with one other Juſtice, (if the Offender upon Examination ſhall be found Guilty) ſhall Commit him to Gaol without Bail, &c. for Three Months, and farther to the next Quarter-Seſſions, &c.
Such as Meet or Aſſemble out of their own Pariſh upon the Lord's-Day, for any Sports or Paſtimes whatſoever; or ſuch as ſhall uſe any Unlawful Exerciſe or Paſtime in their own Pariſh upon the Lord's-Day.	1 *Car.* c. 1.	Three Shillings and Four Pence to the Poor, where, &c. to be levied by Diſtreſs and Sale, reſtoring the Overplus, &c. and for want of Diſtreſs, to be ſent to the Stocks for Three Hours; but they muſt be queſtioned within a Month.

If

OFFENCES.	Laws and Statutes.	PENALTIES.
If any Carrier, Wagoner, Butcher, &c. with Horſe, Wain, or Cart, or Drover with Cattle, ſhall Travel upon the Lord's-Day by themſelves, or any other for them,	3 *Car. c.* 1.	Twenty Shillings for every Offence, to be levied by Diſtreſs and Sale, to the Uſe of the Poor.
If any Butcher, or any other for him, ſhall Kill or Sell any Victuals upon the *Sunday*, Two Witneſſes, View, or Confeſſion,	3 *Car. c.* 1.	He ſhall Forfeit Six Shillings and Eight Pence, if queſtioned within Six Months, to be Levied, &c. or may be Sued for in Seſſions, &c.
If any Shooe-Maker ſhall ſhew with intent to Sell any Boots, Shooes, &c. on the *Sunday*,	1 *Jac. c.* 22.	He ſhall Forfeit the Value of every ſuch pair, and alſo Three Shillings and Four Pence for every Pair.
If any Perſon of the Age of 14, ſhall on the Lord's-Day, or any part thereof, do any Worldly Labour, Buſineſs, or Work, &c. except Works of Neceſſity and Charity,	29 *Car.* 2. *Cap.* 7.	He ſhall Forfeit Five Shillings for every Offence.
If any Perſon ſhall Cry, Shew forth, or put to Sale, any Wares, Fruit, Goods, &c. except Milk only, before the Hours of Nine in the Morning, & after four in the Afternoon,	29 *Car.* 2. *cap.* 7.	He ſhall Forfeit the ſaid Wares, Fruit, Goods, &c. to the Uſe of the Poor.
No Drover, Horſe-Courſer, Wagoner, Butcher, Higler, or any of their Servants, ſhall Travel, or come to their Inns, on the Lord's-Day.	29 *Car.* 2. *cap.* 7.	The Forfeiture is Twenty Shillings for every Offence.
No Perſon ſhall uſe to Travel upon the Lord's-Day with any Boat, Wherry, &c. except allow'd by one Juſtice of Peace ſo to do,	29 *Car.* 2. *cap.* 7.	The Forfeiture is Five Shillings for every Offence. The Conviction upon the Statute muſt be before any Juſtice of the County, &c. who ſhall give Warrant to the Conſtables, &c. to Seize the Goods ſhewed, &c. and to Levy the Forfeitures by Diſtreſs, &c.
By View, Confeſſion, or one Witneſs.		

OFFENCES.	Laws and Statutes.	PENALTIES.
This Act extends not to dreſſing of Meat in Cooks-Shops, Inns, or Victualling-Houſes, for ſuch as otherwiſe cannot be provided; nor to Hackney Coaches that are Licenſed.		and for want of Diſtreſs, to put the Offender in the Stocks for Two Hours: The Juſtices, &c. may reward the Informer out of the Forfeitures, not exceeding the Third part. Every Perſon muſt be Impeached upon this Act within Ten Days after the Offence.
Drunkenneſs. A Crime, from which the Ancient *Britains* were free, therefore the Laws againſt it are new.	*Co.* 3 *Inſtit. fol.* 200, 201.	The Offender for the firſt to pay Five Shillings to the Church-Wardens, where, &c. within one Week after Conviction, or elſe to be Levied by Warrant, &c. by Diſtreſs and Sale; and for want of Diſtreſs, to ſit in the Stocks ſix Hours.
If any be Convicted for being Drunk, by One Witneſs, View, or Confeſſion, and the Party confeſſing a good Witneſs againſt another Offending at the ſame time.	4 *Jac. c.* 5. 21 *Jac. c.* 7.	
If any Ale Houſe-Keeper be Convicted of Drunkenneſs, he is diſabled for Three Years to keep any Ale-Houſe.	7 *Jac. c.* 10. 21 *Jac. c.* 7.	For the ſecond Offence, muſt be Bound in Ten Pounds, with Two Sureties to the good Behaviour; and for want of Sureties, to be ſent to Gaol.
This Conviction of Drunkenneſs muſt be within Six Months after the Offence committed.		If the Conſtable levy not the Forfeitures, he Forfeits Ten Shillings to the Poor, *ut ſupra.*
Inn-Keepers, Ale-Houſe-Keepers, or Victuallers, that ſuffer any of the ſame Pariſh to continue Tipling in their Houſes,	1 *Jac. c.* 9. 21 *Jac. c.* 7.	Ten Shillings to be Levied by Diſtreſs, and Sale after ſix days; and for want of Diſtreſs, to be committed till Payment, and Diſabled for 3 Years from keeping any Ale-Houſe, &c.
One Witneſs, View, or Confeſſion, and the Party confeſſing a good Witneſs againſt another Offending at the ſame time.		If the Conſtable or Church-Warden do not Levy the Penalty, or ſhall not certifie the want of Diſtreſs within Twenty Days, he Forfeits Forty Shillings, to be levied by Diſtreſs and Sale, *ut ſupra.*

If

OFFENCES.	Laws and Statutes.	PENALTIES.
If any Inn-Keeper, Ale-House-Keeper, Victualler, or Taverner, suffer any Person (whereſoever his Habitation be) to continue Tipling in his Houſe,	1 *Jac. cap.* 9. 21 *Jac.* C. 7. 1 *Car. cap.* 4.	Ten Shillings to be Levied by Diſtreſs, and for want of Satisfaction, in ſix days to be ſold, reſtoring the Overplus; and for want of Diſtreſs, to be committed till Payment.
Two Witneſſes, or View.		
Townſmen or others which ſhall remain Tipling in any Inn, Ale-Houſe, or Victualling-Houſe, One Witneſs, View, or Confeſſion, *ut ſupra.*	4 *Jac. cap.* 5. 21 *Jac. c.* 7.	Three Shillings and Four Pence, to be Levied by Diſtreſs, after one Weeks Neglect of Payment; or to ſit in the Stocks four Hours.
Conſtables ſhall be charged on their Oaths to preſent Offences committed againſt theſe *Acts.*	1 *Car. cap.* 4. 21 *Jac. c.* 7. *Dalt. cap.* 7.	The Conſtable for his Neglect Forfeits Ten Shillings, *ut ſupra.*
Theſe Statutes do Prohibit all Quaffing, and Drinking of Healths, ſuch Houſes being ſolely appointed for the Accommodation of Travellers, and for the Relief of the Poor.		Every ſuch Taverner, which ſhall ſuffer any Perſon whatſoever to Tipple in his Houſe, contrary to the ſaid Statutes, ſhall be adjudged within the Statute, 1 *Jac. Cap.* 9.

Swearing & Curſing.

If any Perſon ſhall Prophanely Swear or Curſe in the Hearing of a Juſtice of Peace, Mayor, *&c.* or be Convicted of ſuch Swearing, by One Witneſs, or Confeſſion of the Party,	21 *Jac. c.* 20 3 *Car. c.* 4. 17 *Car. c.* 4. 6, 7 *Guliel. Cap.* 11.	He ſhall forfeit for every ſuch Offence, to the Uſe of the Poor, the reſpective Sums following; every Servant, Day-Labourer, common Soldier, and common Seaman, One Shilling; every other Perſon, Two Shillings: If any Perſon, after Conviction, ſhall offend a Second time, ſuch Perſon ſhall pay Double; and if a Third time, Trebble the Sum reſpectively to be paid for the firſt Offence. Every Juſtice, Head-Officer, &c. may Command the Conſtables, &c. to Levy the ſame by Diſtreſs: And for want of Diſtreſs, the Offender being above the Age of Sixteen Years, ſhall be ſet in the Stocks, for every ſingle Offence, one Hour; for any Number, at one and the ſame time, two Hours: If under Sixteen Years old, and ſhall not pay the ſaid Twelve pence, he ſhall be whipp'd by the Conſtable, by Warrant of the Juſtice,
Every Offence againſt this Act muſt be proved within Ten Days after the Offence Committed.		
Every Juſtice ſhall Regiſter, *&c.* and certifie to the next		Quarter-

OFFENCES.	Laws and Statutes.	PENALTIES.
Quarter-Seſſions of Peace all Convictions made before him upon this Act, and the time of making thereof, and for what Offence.		or by the Parent, Guardian, or Maſter, in the Preſence of the Conſtable. Every Juſtice, or chief Magiſtrate, wilfully omitting the Performing of his Duty, ſhall forfeit Five Pounds, to be recovered by Action. The Act of the Sixth and Seventh of King WILLIAM to be Read four times in the Year, in all Churches and Chappels, under the pain of Twenty Shillings for Neglect thereof. General Iſſue, *&c.* Treble Coſts, *&c.*
None ſhall in any Stage-Play, Shew, May-game, Interlude, or Pageant, Jeſtingly or Prophanely ſpeak or uſe the Holy Name of God, Chriſt Jeſus, the Holy Ghoſt, or Trinity.	3 Jac. C. 21.	On pain of Ten Pounds, to be divided between the King and the Proſecutor, to be recovered by Action, *&c.*
Blaſphemy.		
If any Perſon, having been Educated in, or at any time having made Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, within this Realm, ſhall, by Writing, Printing, Teaching, or adviſed Speaking, deny any one of the Perſons in the Holy Trinity to be God, or ſhall aſſert or maintain there are more Gods than One, or ſhall deny the Chriſtian Religion to be true, or the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament to be of Divine Authority, and ſhall upon Indictment or Information in any of His Majeſty's Courts at *Weſtminſter*, or at the Aſſizes, be thereof Lawfully Convicted by the Oath of Two or more credible Witneſſes,	9 & 10. *Gulielm.* 3.	For the firſt Offence, ſhall be adjudged incapable, and diſabled in Law to all Intents and Purpoſes, to have or injoy any Office or Imployment Eccleſiaſtical, Civil, or Military, or any Part in them, or any Profit or Advantage appertaining to them; and if at the Time of Conviction Poſſeſt, *&c.* ſuch Office, Place, or Imployment, ſhall be void.
Note. This Statute puniſhes not the Error, but the Impudence of the Offender.		On the ſecond Conviction, ſhall be diſabled to Sue, Proſecute, Plead, or uſe any Action or Information in any Court of Law or Equity; or to be a Guardian, or an Executor, or Adminiſtrator, or capable of any Legacy, or Deed of Gift, or of any Office, Civil or Military, or Benefice Eccleſiaſtical; and ſhall ſuffer three Years Impriſonment, without Bail, from the Time of the Conviction.
		The Information to a Juſtice of Peace, to be within four Days for Words, and the Proſecution within three Months after.
		To be diſcharged of the Penalties incurr'd by the firſt Conviction, on Renunciation, in the ſame Court where Convicted, within four Months after the Conviction.

OFFENCES.	Laws and Statutes.	PENALTIES.
Leud and Diſorderly Practices.		
Keeping of Baudy-Houſes, *&c.* is againſt the Law of God, on which our Common Law in this Caſe is grounded: Therefore the Keepers of Houſes of Baudry and Incontinence,	1 *Vent.* 53. *Co.* 3. *Inſtit. Cap.* 98. 1 *Hen.* 7. *fol.* 6.	Are to be Puniſhed, being a Common Nuiſance, by Indictment at Common Law, by Fine and Impriſonment.
Reſorters and Frequenters of Baudy-Houſes,		To be Bound with Sureties to the good Behaviour.
The *Ordinary* may puniſh *Incontinency* in their *Clergy* by Impriſonment, at their diſcretion.	1 *Hen.* 7. *Cap.* 4.	
Adultery, *&c.* and all Acts of Baudry, are Breaches of the Peace,	5 *Co.* 1 p^t. 27 b.	For which an Indictment will lie.
If a Conſtable, *&c.* has Notice that a Woman is in Adultery, *&c.* with a Man, or that a Man or Woman of evil Fame is gone to a ſuſpected Houſe,	*Cook* 3 *Inſt. Dal. f.* 224.	He may take Help with him, and if he find them ſo, he may carry them to Priſon, or to a Juſtice, to be Bound over and Proſecuted.
One that hath leud Women found in his Houſe, common Whore-Maſters, or Whores,		To find ſufficient Sureties for the Good Behaviour.
Strangers, or others, that are ſuſpicious, that walk by Night, eſpecially if they haunt leud Houſes, or keep ill Company, or commit Outrages,	7 *Jac. cap.* 4. 39 *Eliz. c.* 4. 43 *Eliz. c.* 2. 4 *Hen.* 7. *Cap.* 12.	On pain of being put out of *Commiſſion*, and other Puniſhment according to demerits.
Juſtices muſt do their Duty,		To be Committed to the Houſe of Correction.
Idlers that refuſe to Work, and Diſorderly Perſons,	39 *Eliz. c.* 4.	To be Whipp'd, and ſent to the Place of Birth; or if that not known, where laſt dwelt for one Year, or laſt paſſed.
Wandring Rogues, *&c.*	1 *Jac. cap.* 7.	He Forfeits Ten Shillings, to be Levied by a Warrant from Two Juſtices.
If the Conſtable puniſh them not,		Such

OFFENCES.	Laws and Statutes.	PENALTIES.
Such as ſhall not Apprehend Rogues, &c. being at their Doors, Two Witneſſes, or Confeſſion,	1 *Jac.* c. 7.	Ten Shillings to be Levied, *ut ſupra*,
Every Conſtable, &c. who does not puniſh ſuch as are brought to him,	39 *Eliz.* c. 4.	Twenty Shillings to be Levied, *ut ſupra*.
Such as diſturb the Puniſhment of Rogues, &c.	1 *Jac.* C. 7.	Five Pounds to be Levied by Diſtreſs, and Bound to the Good Behaviour by Two Juſtices, *Quorum un.*
Officers remiſs in Puniſhing of Rogues, &c.		Ten Shillings to be Levied by Diſtreſs and Sale, *ut ſupra*,
Such as run away, and leave their Charge upon the Pariſh,		To be Puniſhed as Rogues, &c.
Such as threaten to run away, Two Witneſſes,	7 *Jac.* C. 4.	To be ſent to the Houſe of Correction, or give Security to diſcharge the Pariſh.
If any Woman ſhall have a Baſtard Child which may be chargeable to the Pariſh,		Houſe of Correction for One Year, to be ſent by Two Juſtices, and Bound not to Offend ſo again.
Gaming.		
Keepers of Play-Houſes, & Unlawful Games, Upon View,	33 *Hen.* 8. *Cap.* 9.	Forty Shillings, and Impriſonment until he become Bound by Recognizance to keep no more.
Officers ſhall ſearch every Month,		Forty Shillings.
Such as Play in ſuch Houſes, Upon View,		Impriſonment until he be bound to play no more, and to pay 6*s.* 8*d.* to be recovered in *Quarter-Seſſions*.
Such Perſons deſcribed in the Act as out of *Chriſtmaſs*, ſhall play at Unlawful Games any where within the Year,	16 *Car.* 2. *cap.* 7.	Impriſonment, and bound to the King to play no more, Twenty Shillings by Indictment in *Quarter-Seſſions*.
Fraud in Play or Betting,	2, 3 *P. & M. Cap.* 9.	Forfeit the Treble Value.
All Licenſes to keep Houſes or Places of Unlawful Games, ſhall be void.		Treble Coſts.

Anno

Anno Sexto & Septimo

GULIELMI III. REGIS.

An Act for the more Effectual Suppreſſing Prophane Curſing and Swearing.

Hereas it is found by Experience, that an Act of Parliament made in the One and twentieth year of the Reign of King *James* the Firſt, Intituled, *An Act to Prevent and Reform Prophane Swearing and Curſing*, hath proved Ineffectual to the Suppreſſing of thoſe deteſtable Sins, by reaſon of ſome Deficiencies in the ſaid Act: Be it therefore Enacted by the King's moſt Excellent Majeſty, by and with the Advice and Conſent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in this preſent Parliament Aſſembled, and by the Authority of the ſame, That if any Perſon or Perſons ſhall (after the Four and twentieth Day of *June*, in the Year of our Lord, One thouſand ſix hundred ninety five) Prophanely Swear or Curſe in the preſence or hearing of any Juſtice of Peace of the County, Riding or Diviſion, or of the Mayor, or other Head

Head Officer or Juſtice of Peace for any City or Town Corporate, where ſuch Offence is or ſhall be committed, or that ſhall be thereof Convicted by Oath of One Witneſs, or by the Confeſſion of the Party Offending, before any Juſtice of Peace of the County, or Mayor, or Bayliff, or other Chief Officer, or Juſtice of the Peace of ſuch City or Town Corporate, where the ſaid Offence ſhall be committed, That then, for every ſuch Offence, the Party ſo Offending ſhall Forfeit and Pay to the Uſe of the Poor of the Pariſh, where ſuch Offence or Offences ſhall be committed, the reſpective Sums herein after mentioned; (that is to ſay;) Every Servant, Day-Labourer, Common Soldier and Common Seaman, One Shilling; and every other Perſon, Two Shillings: And in caſe any of the Perſons aforeſaid ſhall after Conviction Offend a Second time, ſuch Perſon ſhall Forfeit and Pay double; And if a Third time, treble the Sum reſpectively by him or her to be paid for the Firſt Offence.

And it is hereby further Enacted, That upon Neglect or Refuſal of Payment of the ſaid Forfeiture, any Juſtice of Peace, of the County, Riding or Diviſion, or Mayor, or other Head Officer, or Juſtice of Peace of any City, or Town Corporate, where the ſaid Offences ſhall be committed, ſhall and are hereby Authorized and Required to Direct and Send his Warrant to the Conſtable, Tythingman, Church-Warden, or Overſeer of the Poor of the Pariſh where the Offence ſhall be committed, or where the Offender ſhall Inhabit, thereby commanding them, or ſome one or more of them, to Levy by Diſtreſs and Sale of the Goods of the Offender, the Sum

ſo

ſo Forfeited, for the Uſe of the Poor of the Pariſh, as aforeſaid; And in caſe no ſuch Diſtreſs can be had, then every ſuch Offender, being above the Age of Sixteen Years, ſhall, by Warrant under the Hand and Seal of the ſaid Juſtice of Peace or other Officer, as aforeſaid, be publickly ſet in the Stocks for the ſpace of One Hour for every ſingle Offence, and for any Number of Offences, whereof he ſhall be Convicted, at one and the ſame time, then Two Hours: And if the Party Offending be under the Age of Sixteen Years, and ſhall not forthwith Pay the ſaid Forfeitures, then he or ſhe ſhall, by Warrant, as aforeſaid, be Whipped by the Conſtable, or by the Parent, Guardian or Maſter of ſuch Offender, in the preſence of the Conſtable.

☞ And be it further Enacted, That if any Juſtice of the Peace, or Chief Magiſtrate, ſhall wilfully and wittingly omit the Performance of his Duty in the Execution of this Act, he ſhall Forfeit the Sum of Five Pounds, the one Moiety to the Uſe of the Informer, to be Recovered by Action, Suit, Bill, or Plaint, in any of His Majeſty's Courts at *Weſtminſter*, wherein no Eſſoign, Protection or Wager of Law ſhall be Allowed, nor any more than one Imparlance.

And it is hereby further Enacted, That if any Action or Suit ſhall be Commenced or Brought againſt any Juſtice of Peace, Conſtable, or other Officer, or Perſon whatſoever, for doing or cauſing to be done any thing in purſuance of this Act, concerning the ſaid Offences, the Defendant, in ſuch Action, may Plead the General Iſſue, and give the Special Matter in Evidence: And if upon ſuch Action Verdict be given for the Defendant, or the Plaintiff become Non-

ſuit,

ſuit, or Diſcontinue his Action, then the Defendant ſhall have Treble Coſts.

Provided always, and it is hereby Enacted, That no Perſon ſhall be Proſecuted or Troubled for any Offence againſt this Statute, unleſs the ſame be Proved or Proſecuted within Ten Days next after the Offence committed.

☞ And it is further Enacted, by the Authority aforeſaid, That this Act ſhall be publickly Read Four ſeveral times in the Year in all Pariſh Churches, and all Publick Chapels, by the Parſon, Vicar or Curate of the reſpective Pariſhes or Chapels, immediately after Morning Prayer, on Four ſeveral Sundays; (that is to ſay) the Sunday next after the Four and twentieth Day of *June*, the Nine and twentieth Day of *September*, the Five and twentieth Day of *December*, and the Five and twentieth Day of *March*, under the Pain of Twenty Shillings for every ſuch Omiſſion or Neglect.

☞ And be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforeſaid, That the Juſtice of Peace, Mayor, or other Head Officer, ſhall Regiſter in a Book, to be kept for that Purpoſe, all the Convictions made before him upon this Act, and the time of making thereof, and for what Offence, and ſhall Certifie the ſame to the next General Quarter Seſſions of the Peace for the ſaid County or Place where the Offences are committed, to be there kept upon Record by the reſpective Clerks of the Peace, to be ſeen without Fee or Reward.

FINIS.